



EASTON ROYAL CONSERVATION AREA STATEMENT

September 2004

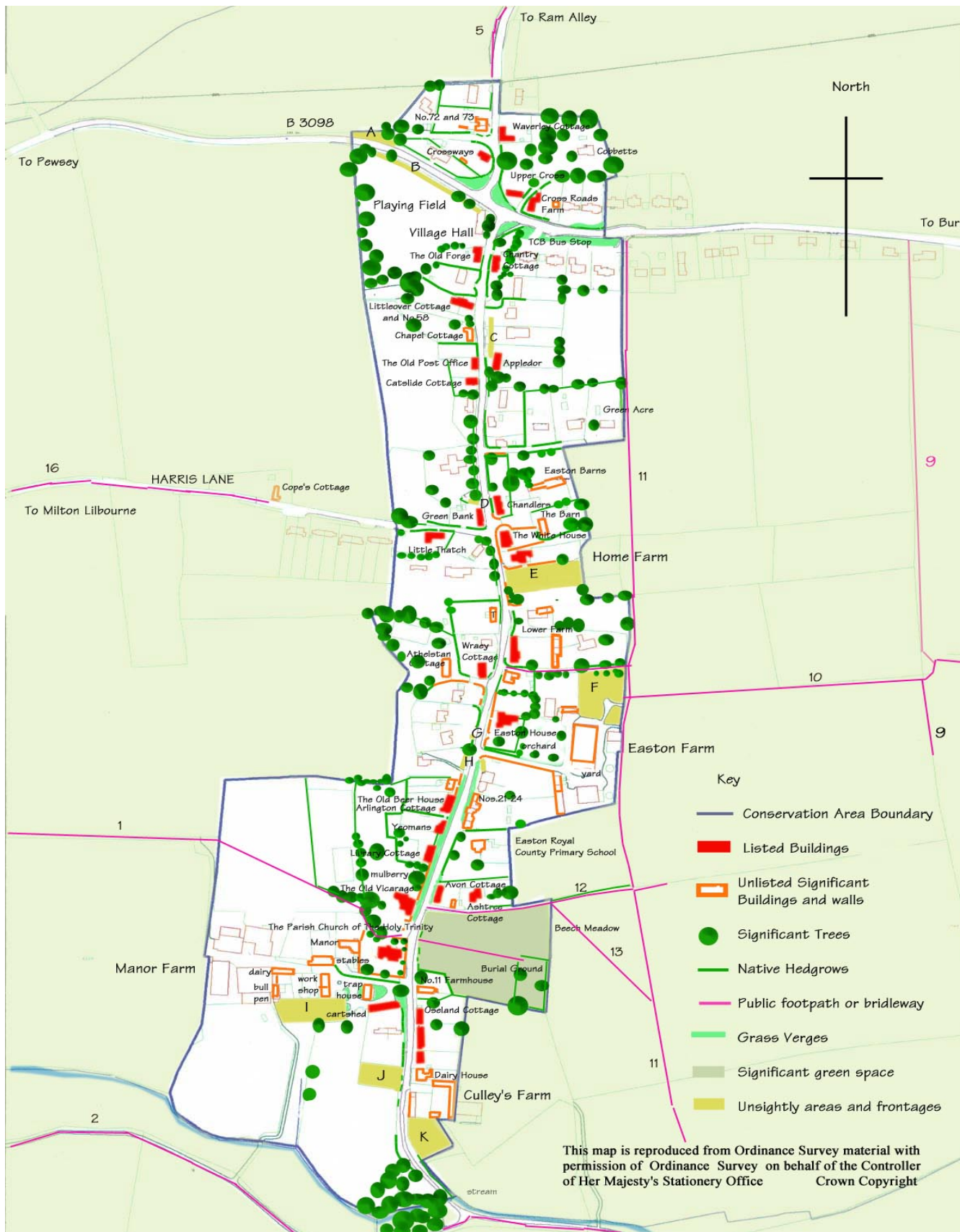
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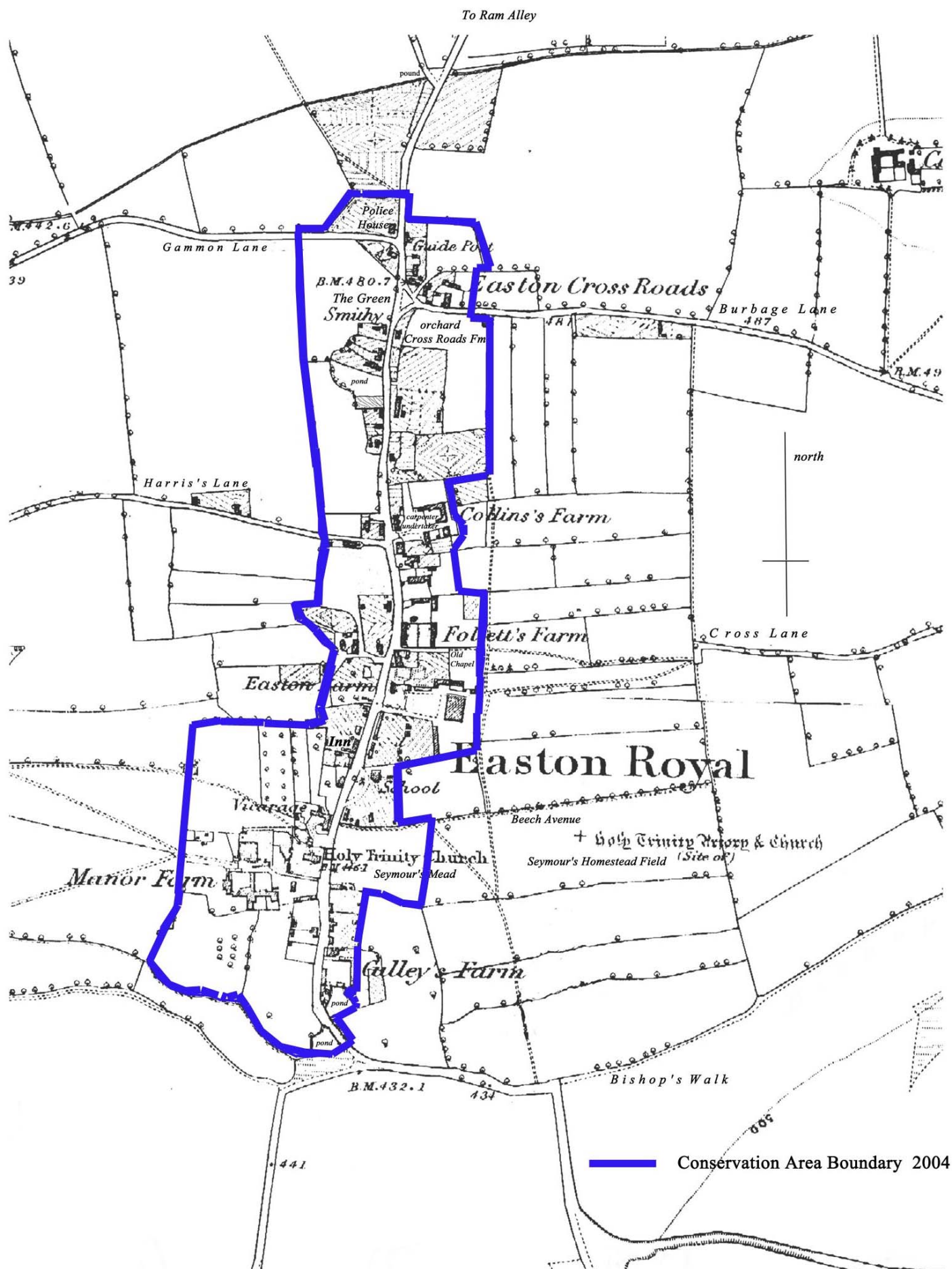
Forward Planning & Transportation

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EASTON ROYAL CONSERVATION AREA



EASTON ROYAL HISTORICAL MAP from the 1888 OS



The junction with the Pewsey to Burbage Road



Easton Farm from east of the village



Cottages adjacent marshy ground at the bottom of the village

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Statement is to identify and record those special qualities of Easton Royal that make up its architectural and historic character. This is important in providing a sound basis for the Local Plan policies and development decisions, as well as for the formulation of proposals for the preservation and enhancement of the character or appearance of the area. The Conservation Area was designated in 1975. This Statement includes a review of the Easton Royal Conservation Area and is intended for all those with an interest in the village, or undertaking work on the buildings, landscape, roads or public spaces. It is also essential reading for anyone contemplating development within the area. By drawing attention to the distinctive features of Easton Royal it is intended that its character will be protected and enhanced for the benefit of this and future generations.

LOCATION

The village is situated in the Vale of Pewsey east of the centre of Wiltshire 4 miles from Pewsey on the B3087 road to Burbage and 7 miles south of Marlborough.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Easton Royal is a mainly linear village of farmhouses and thatched cottages. Several modern houses line the road to Burbage but loosely grouped around the crossroads are several thatched cottages, former farmhouses and the village hall. These form the beginning of the quiet sunken lane of the village street. The lane slopes south for half a mile to a stream below the north slope of Salisbury Plain.. Overhung by hedgerows, trees, grassy banks and with the leafy gardens of the thatched cottages it is endowed with an exceptionally rural character.

In the centre the imposing 18th century Easton House fronts an active farm group of mainly traditional brick and tile buildings adjoining the eastern meadows. Upon roadside banks cottages face across the street adjacent the Victorian primary school building.

Beside the lane to the south east a large meadow is the site of the former medieval priory and a Tudor mansion of the Seymour family, the historic wardens of Savernake Forest. The Old Vicarage, the 16th century parish church, the Manor and some traditional farm buildings of Manor Farm form an historic group among mature trees. The modern yard of Manor Farm extends west to open farmland while a single row of cottages and a stockyard at the bottom of the street form the end of the village opposite the marshy ground beside the stream.



Salisbury Plain dominates the village in the south. Easton clump is a six acre plantation of beech trees



The village set in the Vale of Pewsey seen from Salisbury Plain



Meadowland with isolated trees extends east away from the village .



Arable land and oak trees border the village in the west. Harris Lane is defined by a row of trees.

LANDSCAPE SETTING

The village is situated close to Salisbury Plain in the Vale of Pewsey near the south western fringe of Savernake Forest.

Before 1330 when Savernake Forest was more extensive the eastern side of the village Street marked a north south section of its southern boundary.

The parish of Easton Royal is long and narrow across the geological outcrops of the north eastern edge of Salisbury Plain. The scarp slope crosses the centre of the parish from east to west. The ridge of Easton Hill runs south from the slope and is topped by Easton clump a distinctive group of beech trees.

The village is surrounded by gently sloping agricultural land with varied densities of hedgerow and trees forming the field boundaries. These join in the north with mature tree groups to reach into the village. At the lower southern end a line of more substantial hedgerows and mature trees follow the course of a stream along the bottom of the valley. Beyond the valley there are few trees and open arable land sweeps up to meet the lynchets on the scarp slope of Salisbury Plain.

The soil types in the village and to the north are generally Greensand with clay in the fields adjoining the banks of the stream to the south. There is chalk near the surface of the slopes up to Salisbury Plain.



The village street is largely a rural lane passing between grass covered Greensand banks

ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT

The name Easton is derived from the Saxon 'east tun' presumably taken from its relationship to Pewsey and separated from it by the 'middle tun' ie. Milton. Both small settlements were originally colonized by Pewsey. In 1086 it may have been part of a large estate called Wootton owned by the monarch. By 1186 part was owned by the Bishop of Hereford and part by Bradenstoke priory. In 1198 the bishop granted his half to Adam of Easton.

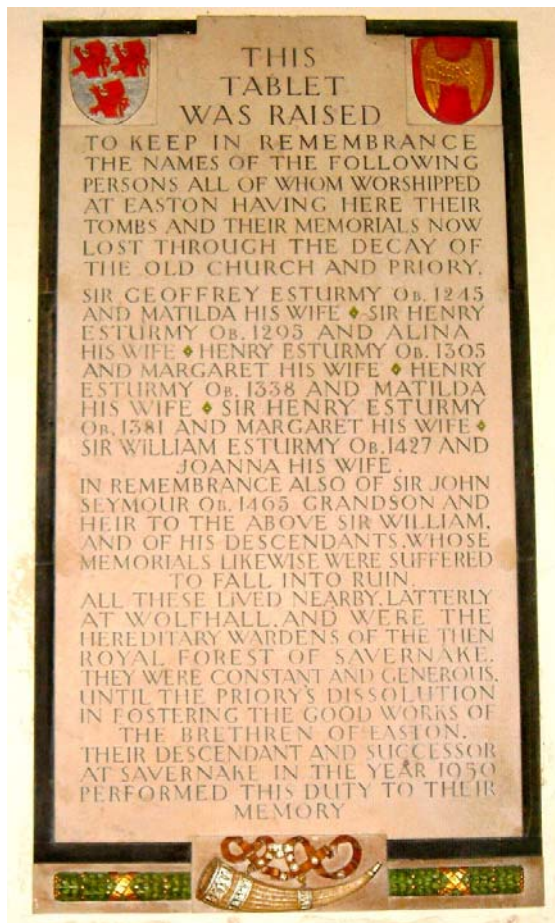
The affix of 'Royal' was not in common use until in 1838 when a historian John Ward vicar of Great Bedwyn mistakenly described the gift of the parish church to Easton as a royal donative in 1369. The medieval history of the village is certainly connected with that of a Priory founded there in the 13th century but the subsequent royal association with the village through the priory is stronger in the 16th century.

Easton Priory was an order of Trinitarian friars that originated in France in about 1190. The founder in Easton was a Stephen of Tisbury then Archdeacon of Wiltshire. He had, in 1245, inherited land and a mansion from his father Sir Adam of Easton. He gave this property to establish a friary and this was ordained by Henry III at Marlborough in July 1251. It was the sixth Hospital of the Holy Trinity in England. As a mendicant order it was forbidden to possess private property but was generously patronized by the Esturmy and Druelys families of Easton both relatives of Stephen of Tisbury. In addition there were several other benefactions of property in the area. Travellers on the road by the priory, the modern village lane, received hospitality from the friars who nursed the sick and collected for the mother house in France to pay ransoms for Crusaders captured abroad. The friars, being relatively literate, also assisted the benefactors and others in drawing-up documents. Easton became as a result something of a local centre of culture. In 1316 a friar there became the Esturmy family's official Keeper of Title Deeds, an important role since the Esturmys were the hereditary Wardens of Savernake Forest.

During 1368 however the village population became seriously depleted by the 'Black Death' and only 10 families were left in the parish. They pleaded with the friars that there were too few of them to continue to maintain the parish church of St Mary's and suggested that they might be allowed to abandon the building and share their Priory chapel opposite. To do this they volunteered to enlarge the chapel with materials and the bells taken from the abandoned church. This was agreed and from 1369 the parish church was combined in the same building as the priory chapel.

However by 1391 the friars are reported as having 'their chapel and hospice utterly collapsed'. To help them and the parish recover Sir William Esturmy gave them the tithes and perquisites of Tidcombe church and the manor with its income from Froxfield.

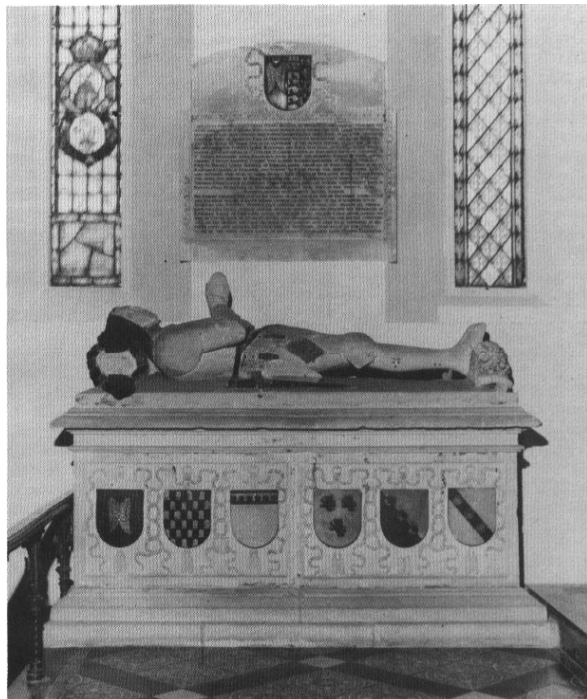
Sir William died at Wolfhall in 1427 without a male heir but his daughter Matilda had married into the Seymour family. Her son John at 14 became the first Seymour Warden of Savernake Forest and under him there was little change to the Priory. In 1493 however fire damaged the premises so seriously that the Bishop of Salisbury sought help for it throughout the diocese and the friars were given authority by Henry VII to tour the country soliciting alms for its rebuilding. With some success in this the Priory continued in being for a further 43 years.



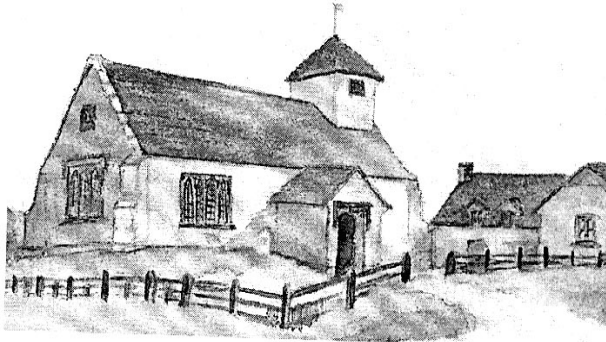
The tablet in the church to the early hereditary wardens of Savernake Forest with the Esturmy hunting horn of ivory and silver depicted at the foot. The historic horn is in the possession of the Earl of Cardigan.



The Parish Church of Holy Trinity and the burial ground near the site of the former Priory Chapel



Sir John Seymour (d. 1535) his 1591 tomb in Great Bedwyn church.



The original Elizabethan Church of 1591 before T H Wyatt's alterations of 1853

In 1535 a later John Seymour, 'the worthie Sir John' was Warden of the forest when Henry VIII married his daughter Jane. She became his third queen consort and mother of Edward VI. Sir John died soon afterwards and was buried in the Priory chapel. His heir Edward Seymour already a diplomat at court and friend of the king, was elevated, through the king's marriage to his sister Jane, to even more power and influence.

When the Act of Dissolution was passed in 1536 the King's Commissioners visited the Priory and described the buildings in ruins and roofless. Like other monastic houses it was dissolved under the Act but perhaps because of its reported condition and its dual role as a parish church orders to destroy it were not issued. However, ownership of the Priory and all its land were wrested from the benefactors by the commission and vested in Edward Seymour. The Trinitarian friars were dispersed except for the last Prior, Henry Bryan who found Edward Seymour sufficiently tolerant to let him continue as curate to the parish church under the new Protestant regime. From 1544 the adjoining Priory mansion was used by Seymour to house his receiver.

In 1547 Henry VIII confirmed Edward Seymour as not only Warden of Savernake Forest but with the titles of Earl of Hertford, Duke of Somerset and Governor and Protector of the Realm. The latter to look after the interests of his 10 year old son Edward VI when he succeeded to the throne. It was from then on that Royal was more likely to have been affixed to Easton as its name.

Edward Seymour however had planned a large park and an even grander mansion at Brail Woods near Great Bedwyn and becoming too ambitious, was ousted from the protectorate and executed at the Tower in 1552.

The medieval mansion of Easton priory stood until 1580 when Seymour began building a new mansion near the site. The Priory chapel meanwhile remained in use by the parish until 1591 when under Seymour The Earl of Hertford the building of a new parish church was completed on the pre 1368 site on the west side of the Street. Edward's heir Edward Seymour removed his grandfather, Sir John Seymour's, body from Easton to a grand tomb in Great Bedwyn church and demolished the Priory chapel.

The new Elizabethan Protestant Church of 1591 maintained the name of the priory chapel of Holy Trinity. It was a simple building with only a wide nave and a square bell turret astride the west end of the roof. It was without the usual type of lower and narrow chancel and the mullioned windows were without tracery of two three and four simple lights with four centred heads.

In 1676 among other property in Savernake forest the Elizabethan Manor devolved upon Lady Elizabeth Seymour. She married Thomas Bruce Earl of Ailesbury. Several generations of the Seymour and Bruce families continued to live at the Easton mansion until 1738, when the last, the sixth baronet became the eighth Duke of Somerset and he removed to Tottenham Park. By 1773 the mansion no longer appeared on maps or records and it must be assumed to have been demolished. With it went the last connection with the Priory at Easton. The Bruces however continued as landlords into the 20th century when in 1929 outlying parts of the Ailesbury Estate including those in Easton Royal were sold.



13th century carved stone taken from the priory ruins incorporated in the churchyard retaining wall.



The Beech Avenue in c1900 that lined the drive to the Seymours' mansion demolished in the 1770s.

Non conformists were numerous in 19th century Easton and the first meetings of Methodists were held in a house certified for worship in 1835. A cottage although well attended was so ruinous in 1862 that services were transferred to a converted farm building. A new red brick chapel was built in 1898 but the congregation declined in the 20th century and it closed in the mid 1950s to be converted and extended into a cottage.

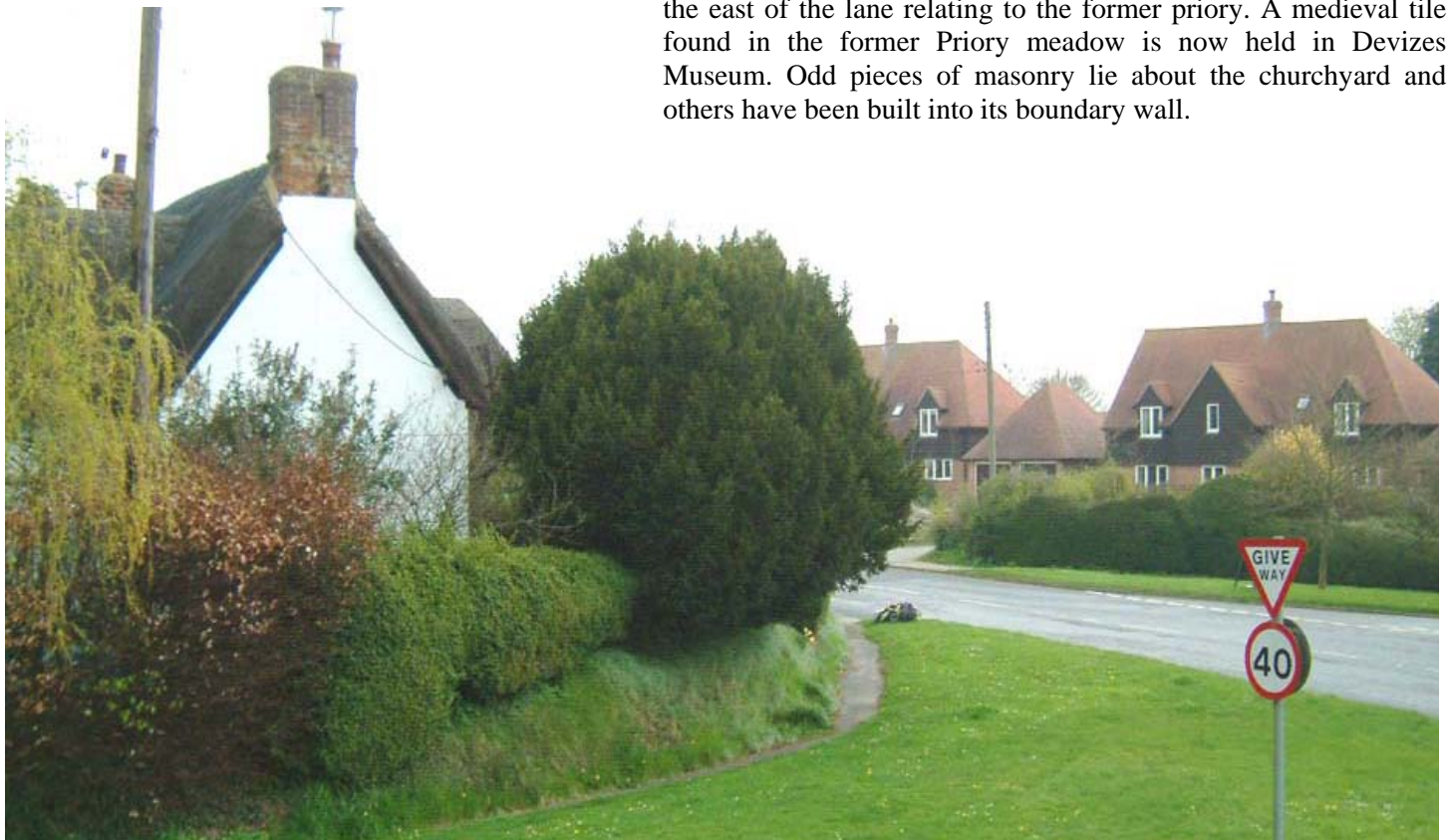
The first village school was held in 1814 in one room of a house. In 1831 a National School opened for 32 pupils and by 1847 72 were attending. The existing school was built in 1871 and average attendance up to 1914 was 55. Today in 2004 there are 40 pupils and the premises have been extended with a 'mobile' and further improvements are contemplated for enlarging the school.

In 1920 with a population of about 300 the village was a poor inward looking almost self-sufficient agricultural labouring community of seven farms. In the early 21st century with a population of about 250 there are just two active farms worked by three men but it has become an affluent village with a residential community of commuters, the self employed in diverse businesses and the retired.

ARCHAEOLOGY

In the area of the village itself several finds have been recorded including an iron age coin at Green Acre and a Romano British coin near the village school. In addition a number of features have been noted outside the Conservation Area on aerial photographs including a circular earthwork, possibly a moated site with an associated Holloway east of Crossways Lane, an undated field system and a series of strip lynchets to the south east of Bishop's Walk.

Furthermore, a number of features have been noted immediately to the east of the lane relating to the former priory. A medieval tile found in the former Priory meadow is now held in Devizes Museum. Odd pieces of masonry lie about the churchyard and others have been built into its boundary wall.



Old and new houses, shrubs, native hedges and wide grass verges in the area of the former village green in the north of the village.



The northern lane to Ram Alley .Waverley Cottage, Crossways and the slate roofed late 19th century Ailesbury Estate built semi-detached



The lane enters the old village between coniferous trees, banks, dense green hedges and The Old Forge



Oak and birch on the edge of the playing field



'Chantry' Cottage is originally of the 18th century but extended at both ends in the 19th and 20th centuries it was formerly one of the village shops.

ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORIC CHARACTER

In the north of the village the B3098 was straightened in 1960 to allow the free flow of east-west traffic. As a result there is a 'dead leg' on the old Pewsey Road or Gammon Lane, its local name. This now quietly serves several houses north of the junction off the lane to Ram Alley. Three buildings are thatched; Crossways is a 17th century cottage with a lobby entry plan of timber frame rendered and roughcast. It has a 20th century extension to the west that is thatched cosmetically across the front. A thatched timber shed in the garden, though, has strong rural character. Waverley Cottage is of slightly later date has been extended into a rear wing that was probably a barn refurbished in the 20th century.

Opposite is a 19th century brick and slate house that was likely to have been the police house. Now divided in to two cottages it has unusually massive quoins in buff bricks of the Ailesbury Estate type to corners and chimneys. At the rear there is a variety of extensions that detract from the interesting front.

Facing the main road is Uppercross a 17th century former thatched farmhouse originally of timber frame but now substantially of brick painted. In the garden significant trees including beech, willow and holly are enclosed by a thick hedge.

The original village Green was lost as a result of the highway realignment but the areas of grass verge contribute much to enhance the setting of the thatched and traditional houses around the junction despite the proximity of traffic.

This area loosely encircled by both historic and 20th century houses appears to be the centre of today's village. Several amenities are located there including the village hall and playing field, bus stops, telephone call box, Royal Mail post box and a park bench.

The village hall is an unobtrusive shiplap boarded building, a former army barrack room presented to the village by Mr Stanley Haines of Manor Farm in 1930. It is screened on its east side by tall coniferous trees but exposed with the playing field on the north side to the main road by the chain-link fence. However to the south and west of the playing field there is a good belt of trees including mature oak and birch.

Off the Street adjacent the village hall is the Old Forge, now entirely residential. It is a small 18th century house of brick, stone and flints with an interesting single storey part that was the blacksmith's workshop housing the forge. It had double doors in the arched window opening and a tall single flue brick chimney-stack. The latter rose from the corner hearth at the rear but demolished since 1988. The former chimney and doors were historic features that identified the building's former important role in village life. The frontage however is well defined by a strong hedge directly on the roadside.

Opposite is Chantry Cottage built of brick in the 18th century as a small two storey symmetrical façade with leaded light windows, a central door and a south gable chimney. Added to it in the 19th century was a hipped outshut to the north which served for a time as a small shop. In the mid 20th century a larger scale residential extension was added to the south gable. The thick privet hedge makes a strong border to the lane and encloses a garden that contains several significant trees.



Appledor. Formerly up to four cottages of the 17th 18th, and early 19th century extended in the late 20th century



Littleover Cottage and No.58 are of the 18th century



The former Methodist chapel. Extended and altered to a dwelling it retains the original 1899 chapel porch.



Catslide Cottage and The Old Post Office .

These trees enhance the street and screen part of a less appropriate development of three bungalows to the south. Two of the bungalows are particularly exposed although a hedge has recently been planted along the front of one property. Part of this open front extends to No.54 Appledor where the fence and hedge have been cleared and the bank excavated for a parking bay. This listed was originally three possibly four thatched cottages; one of 17th century timber frame of two bays encased in brick and the other of the 19th century also of two bays but entirely of brick with a south outshut. Added since 1988 this two bay outshut is set back to the north in matching brick with low eaves. The extension and all parts of the cottage are consistent in scale and detail across the front and except for the exposed front garden and parking bay the property is an asset to the Street.

Littleover Cottage and No.58 are two early 18th century thatched cottages of three bays of brick and malmstone with two chimneys interestingly placed at right angles to the lane facing south. Originally three single bay cottages Littleover occupies two of the bays with two front doors one of which now gives access to a recent conservatory. A timber lean-to at the rear has a pleasant rural character. The roadside hedge has been replanted which will restore the traditional partially enclosed setting of the cottages in the lane.

Chapel Cottage facing the lane to the south was originally built as a Methodist Chapel in 1899 with tall gothic style arched windows on each side of a central porch. The building has been extended north by a bay and altered with domestic style casements to ground floor and dormers to the upper floor. It is positioned traditionally close to the roadside but its contribution to the Conservation Area is perhaps more historic than architectural.

Also on the roadside further down is The Old Post Office. Much of its small 17th century timber frame survives with a gable chimney. Thatched until 1987 it is now roofed in clay tiles with a new chimney stack following a roof fire. The southern part is a late 19th century brick extension and there is a 20th century kitchen extension at the rear. Near to it Catslide Cottage is at right angles to the road facing south with a continuous rear outshut under a long sloping catslide thatched roof to the north. It is of 18th century brick construction in two bays about a central chimney where each bay may once have been a separate small cottage. Both cottages are set into the bank at road level.

The lane south from this point enters its most deeply sunken section through the village where the grass banks, overhanging hedges and trees are most dominant. Cottages on the eastside opposite and further south are elevated up on the bank.



Greenbank A timber framed house originally of the 15th century at the junction with Harris Lane.



'Chandlers' was formerly a thatched and timber framed house of the 17th century occupied by the village wheelwright, carpenter and undertaker.



The drive entrance to the former estate yard lies between Chandlers and The White House



The 18th century White House is prominent at the junction of the street with Harris Lane. The frontage has a particular and distinctive quality

Green Bank is a handsome thatched single storey and attic house of timber frame on a plinth of malmstone, brick and render. The 15th century central section comprises a living hall and adjoining rooms with chamber structured within three cruck trusses. The irregular external framing is of the 17th century and later but is basically of two panels high with only a few corner braces surviving. The older brick stacks are of the 17th century. Some of the sheltered smaller casements are still of early leaded lights in iron frames. One or two wattle and daub panels survive high up in the frame sheltered by the eaves. The southern gable end has been refaced in 19th century brick and many of the panel noggings are now of brick. These together with the part stone plinth and a modern single storey extension to the north are all painted white. The building is distinctively sited high on the bank close to the lane on the corner of Harris Lane.

Chandlers on the opposite bank behind a thin hedge is also a substantial house formerly the home of the village cartwright, wheelwright, carpenter/joiner and undertaker.

Originally to the rear was the estate yard surrounded by several outbuildings including workshops. These were approached via the drive entrance adjacent the White House. After the Ailesbury Estate sale of 1929 the buildings were for a time in use as racing stables but when this ceased some buildings were demolished and others were converted to private houses including The Barn and Easton Barns.

Chandlers has been rebuilt and altered after fire damage in the 19th and 20th centuries and on being separated from the former yard its driveway access is now immediately to the north. Reconstruction in the styles and materials of more modern times conceal much of the original full cruck house that could be as early as the 14th century. There is a large 20th century brick and tile extension on the rear. A few parts of the original timber frame of 1625-50 can be seen exposed in the front wall that is now also substantially of brick. The pattern and variety of windows openings is interesting but the all-over white paint on the walls conceals much of its reconstruction history.

To the south the former estate yard entrance is substantial and of a traditional quality that is an asset to the Street. The wearing surface of the shallow graded drive is gravel between grass verges. The stone walls with brick copings are as high as the brick gate piers and sweep round in a deep bellmouth. One side adjoins the paling fenced front garden wall of the White House. The wall continues down to join the buttressed brick retaining walls of Home Farm. The frontage in this area is perhaps the least rural in character of the whole street but it has a distinctive quality and a strong sense of place.

The White House was a farmhouse but is now a private residence. The Barn at the rear is also in residential use. The house is particularly prominent in the view from Harris Lane and its south gable wall is prominent in views up the Street. The building appears to have evolved from a 2 bay 17th century cottage. This originally had one chimney in the gabled south wall with a thatched roof hipped only at the northern end. In the early 19th century an extension with a hipped roof was added to the original south gabled wall. The extension had sash windows and the existing cottage casement windows at the front were



The cob wall south of The White House garden



Harris Lane with Little Thatch 17th century



Copes Cottage. Harris Lane. 18th century of brick but much extended in the 20th century



Partridge Cottage is one of a pair of unlisted early 19th century cottages with 20th century extensions

altered to sashes to match. The door was embellished with a canopy porch and further chimneys for coal fires were added at different times in the 19th century.

The White House has the only remaining cob garden wall in the village. This separates it from Home Farm along the boundary for about 30m. It requires urgent renewal of thatch to its coping roof.

Home Farm house was built in 1845 by the Ailesbury Estate and has a datestone on the west gable wall. It was originally of 'L' plan with gable roofs of clay plain tiles incorporating courses of patterned tiles. The walls are of the distinctive 'estate' buff bricks with a diamond pattern of red brick in each gable. Casement windows have the diamond lattice lights also made on the estate. Details include contrasting red rubbed brick arches over the openings, the projecting roof verges and other features of the estate's early Victorian architectural style.

The house is in fine condition together with a recent rear extension in matching materials and details. The farm buildings however are of 20th century utilitarian frame and sheeting structures in a yard surfaced in rough concrete. These are open to the lane and somewhat of an eyesore. The roadside brick buildings are also overgrown and in poor condition.

Harris Lane opposite is a section of the 17th century road that connected the villages along the southern side of the vale before improvements began to the present Pewsey to Burbage Road. The lane is only metalled to the limit of the village beyond which it is a green bridleway lined with trees crossing open country known as 'Milton Avenue' to Milton Lilbourne.

Only two historic buildings stand beside Harris Lane the first is Little Thatch a cottage of 17th century origins. This is a cottage of two bays with an extension that could have been an attached outhouse. First built in timber frame both parts are now entirely clad in brickwork with a west gable chimney that dates from the late 18th century. The windows are small timber casements except for three on the north side that have iron frames and leaded lights.

The second historic building is just outside the Conservation Area boundary. It is the unlisted Cope's Cottage originating in the 18th century and was a watering stop for horses on the old road, thatched and built of brick with various alterations and extensions of the 19th and 20th century.

Further down the west side of the Street the unlisted thatched Partridge Cottage appears to have been built in several stages in the 19th and 20th centuries. The first of 3 bays with the large central chimney stack and the second an extension of 2-bays with a gable stack. Now two cottages the front is marred by utilitarian lean-to porches and a brick and tile extension at the rear. The light red interlocking tiles of the extension roof are not an appropriate material for the village and the brick walls are all painted. However the five upper floor windows have casements with pretty dormered semi circular fanlights.

Wraey Cottage is a listed building dating from the 17th century with a clear history of enlargement. The original central timber framed structure is of small scale panels, three high from plinth to eaves with corner braces. The adjoining outshut is of light scantling and is now installed with the door. Added to both ends are brick extensions built up to the same attic level with matching 3 light dormers. The thatched roof is half hipped at both ends. A ground floor casement has been enlarged that has necessitated the removal of several



Lower Farm house is a timber framed cottage originally of the 17th century.



The footpath east from the Street locally known as Chapel Drang.



No 33 The Old Stores. The casement window opening above the top of the steps was the shop door and adjacent the former shop window.

lengths of the original frame. The main chimney stack is at the rear where there is also a tiled lean-to of almost the full width.

Reached between Wraey Cottage and Orchard Cottage is Aethelstan Cottage which is behind the general alignment of buildings in the lane. Once two dwellings it dates from the early 19th century but has a thatched roof and a lean-to across the rear with a range of large dormer windows. The large wooded garden extends behind the cottages in the street and out to the fields in the west.

Opposite is Lower Farm a 17th century timber framed and thatched farmhouse now largely of brick externally. It was originally of just two bays one on each side of a central chimney with lobby entry. However it was extended north in the 18th century by a further two bays and a gable chimney. The windows are a uniform set of big but well proportioned late 19th century 3-light casements and a six panelled door in a 20th century thatched open porch. Some timber frame survives in the original front wall but all the panels are of brick nogging on a plinth now largely of brick and with claddings of brick at both ends. All the brick even the stack to the original chimney is painted white. The single storey side extension was a former dairy or cheese room.

Also backing on to the rear or eastern boundary with 'Follets' is a range of 19th century traditional outbuildings in brick with slate roofs. These buildings with only the minimum original door and window openings are significant to the agricultural history of the property. Any conversion to an alternative use should respect this characteristic and alterations should be restricted to the east facing walls.

Along the south side of the boundary hedge to Lower Farm is a public footpath once known locally as 'Chapel Drang'. Where 'Drang' may be a derivation of the Saxon 'Drong' meaning a narrow hedged lane. It was so named because it served as the access to a cottage used as a Methodist Chapel from 1834 to about 1862. This stood on the south side of the path but the site is now empty and overgrown. It adjoins part of the extensive yard of Easton Farm. The path leads on east from the village to enter farmland via a stile with branches along a field headland to the north south and east.

Adjacent the path's opening on to the lane is the former village bakery and grocer's shop. It is a simple 2-storey building of the early 20th century that appears similar to a semi-detached pair except for the off-centre ridge chimney. This allowed for a small shop space on the north side and a dwelling house on the south. Construction is of brick with a slate roof and 2-light casement windows. The single storey outbuilding that housed the bakery and the bread ovens was detached from it and stood nearby.



Easton House is a fine brick house of 1783 with 16th century origins.



Easton Farm. Mid 19th century byre, cart shed and modern silos



The east side of the mid 19th century block. The Barn door, stables and modern drier installation

Easton House is architecturally the finest house in the village. A gravelled forecourt on the frontage verge is raised behind a low brick retaining wall with steps is quite distinctive and with the brick garden walls compliments the formal house façade. It was reputedly built for Giles Herne, an estate tenant in 1783. Of a large scale 2-storeys and attics it is symmetrical with 12 pane sash windows about a central door. The façade is of fine proportions in red brick with blue brick mid-storey banding. The south chimney stack is a quite massive structure rising as a landmark above the lower end of the village. Between the gable chimneys the mansard roof incorporates dormer windows with hipped roofs all covered in handmade clay tiles.

The plaque is inscribed with 'TM' and the date but some of the fabric is of a 16th century house. Internally there is a fireplace with a stone Tudor arch, ceiling beams with chamfer stops and a linenfold panel cupboard door all of the earlier period.

It was a tenant farmhouse on the Ailesbury Estate until 1929 and the farmhouse to Easton Farm until 1976.

South of Easton House a gravelled drive leads straight from the street beside a high brick wall to the yard of Easton Farm. The yard adjoins open agricultural land to the east and includes a pleasant old orchard behind Easton House. The traditional buildings are principally a mid 19th century block of several large adjoining red brick gabled structures.

The roofs were probably originally covered in slate but are now with sheeted roofs. The block includes single storey implement sheds set between wide span barns all backing on to a range of two storey stables with a modern grain dryer installation in the upper storey.

Contemporary with the main block there are also some smaller red brick ancillary buildings including a cart shed, byre and other store sheds about the yard. Adjacent are several tall 20th century steel grain silos that contrast well with the low 19th century traditional buildings.

The traditional buildings are part of the active farm and although in regular use are inconvenient for modern farming methods.

The whole group is an example of high quality estate building designed along the lines of 'model farm' buildings that were in vogue at about that time. The group is worthy of preservation as part of the agricultural history of the village.



Easton Farm is an active farm with a fine group of 19th century traditional brick buildings worthy of preservation



The unusual flat top of the high bank serves as a continuous footpath clear of the road. Buildings are closely spaced on both sides. The black iron handrails are more appropriate and unobtrusive than the white timber 'ranch' fences



A pair of former Ailesbury Estate farm cottages of the mid 19th century. The casements are late 20th century.



Arlington Cottage and the white painted front of the former 'Bleeding Horse' alehouse.

Next to 'Brookefield' a modern house is the pair of former farm cottages that like Home Farm and cottage no.s 21-24 and 72-73 represent the Ailesbury Estate's era of Victorian building in the village. Its local interest includes the distinctive estate made bricks, red brick walls with the distinctive buff brick dressings, and a welsh slate roof over a projecting eaves and a wide verge.

The pair is set within a small terraced front garden above the green roadside bank in proximity to the lane and neighbouring cottages to the south.

In the Street to the south more traditional cottages are closely spaced along the banks of the lane without enclosing front gardens. However the later 20th century houses are set back from the lane and erode this otherwise strong characteristic of the close-knit village street.

On the east side is the row of three cottages no.s 21-24 that was built of red brick and slate by the Ailesbury Estate with datestone 1894. Its architectural interest lies in the symmetrical composition of three blocks in two wings with a central projecting gable and two chimneys of an historic revival design with four diagonal stacks. The original entrances were evidently at the rear but since the addition of rear extensions the entrances have been at the front. The single storey Deane Cottage is attached to the south end with dormer windows added to the slate roof.

Several buildings are listed of historic or architectural interest and contribute much to the character of the area. This part of the Street not only includes 18th and 19th century former labourers cottages but a former early 19th century malthouse that once sold ale called 'The Bleeding Horse' (a stool used in pig killing).



The 17th century timber framed 'Yeomans' with an elaborate 19th century refronting.



Library Cottage is of brick from the early 18th century with added 19th century bay windows



The Village School built in 1871 is now the Easton Royal County Primary School



Avon Cottage has 15th century origins

It gained a reputation for encouraging drunken navvies from the canal construction sites into the village and was forced to close by the estate. In 1878 it was leased to a boot maker with a workshop at the rear. When this trade ceased it became the first village post office. Adjoining is the 17th century Arlington Cottage now combined with it into one house. In the late 18th century the front of the latter was raised to a larger scale and faced with red bricks and gauged brick lintols with carved stone keyblocks over the windows. The tall façade is picturesquely related to its lower neighbour. The central entrance is now a small canted and thatched oriel window with the door relocated to the south wall.

Yeomans' is also of the 17th century but with a small timber framed front it was dramatically altered in the late 19th century. To each side of a thatched gabled porch are tall thatched roofed bay windows. These are canted on the ground floor and square on the first floor in framed walls with framed gable roofs. An extension returns to the south in brick with a small casement in the ground storey and a wide flush dormer in the thatched roof. To the front, brick and stone steps with iron handrails leading up from road level are particularly appropriate to the character of the grassy bank and as an approach to the historic cottage.

Also fronting the bank there is the former Reading Room now called Library Cottage and former school teacher's house. Library Cottage is a rectangular 18th century brick house that has been remodelled in the same vein as 'Yeomans' but is a more restrained late 19th century front with simple rectangular bays.

With the two main farmyards close by to the north and south, the school, the post office/shop and the Parish Church nearby this part of the Street was likely to have been the centre of the historic village. The cottage row also has a particular character that is unique to Easton Royal through the relationship of its buildings to the continuous flat topped grass covered bank.

The County Primary School is on a large sloping plot set back from the lane with trees and shrubs behind a roadside hedge. It is a well proportioned building of 1871 on a simple 'T' plan of red brick with stone dressings and blue brick banding. A gabled slate roof sweeps low over the gothic style entrance door and there is a corresponding back door to the playground at the rear.

The main classroom/assembly hall has daylight at each end by large stone mullioned and transomed windows. The central chimney serves fireplaces facing the hall and the second classroom.

A brick and slate lean-to extension was attached at an early date to the side and latterly an ungainly brick cloakroom has been attached to the rear. A mobile classroom also occupies part of the rear playground near the meadow boundary.

Avon Cottage beyond the school is relatively isolated beside the lane. It was originally built as a timber framed house in the 15th - 16th century of a single storey and attics in four bays plus a half bay for the central chimney. The southern bays are of 17th century straight heavy timbers complete with corner braces that stand on a black painted Greensand stone plinth. The original house to the north was probably of three bays but is now just two of lighter irregular timbers but incorporate the remains of 3 pairs of cruck trusses. Inside there are interesting details and. The chimney is



The meadow is the historic site of the priory and important green space in the village and should not in any circumstances be developed. The east end of the 1591 church has an 1852 tower and a perpendicular style window. The hedged burial ground relates to the site of the Priory Chapel that was in use as the Parish Church from 1369 to 1591. Coniferous and broad leafed trees around the Parish Church and the Old Vicarage are a significant group.



The south side of the Old Vicarage. The 1990s extension and new main entrance are on the left

17th century, as are the first floor fireback, spine beams and a staircase with a splat baluster handrail. The south gable wall is largely 19th century brick painted white but timber framed panels of wattle and daub survive high under the eaves. The windows are traditional timber casements, the upper in flush dormers with glazing bars, several are small and fit within the unaltered frame. Avon Cottage is an impressive vernacular building of both traditional and historic interest with two bays that were originally open to the roof. It had been divided into three cottages but is now again a single house.

Ashtree Cottage is also a relatively isolated 18th century brick cottage set back from the lane at the end of a drive beside the historic beech meadow. Of two storeys in two bays with a gable chimney it also has a single bay rear extension of smaller scale also with a gable chimney. The first floor under-eaves windows have been extended into dormers with semicircular heads as at Partridge Cottage.

A slate roofed timber outbuilding is a significant rural survival and enhances the setting of both cottages.

The Old Vicarage was the former home of the anglican rector. The house now stands in extensive walled grounds with some significant trees including a large old mulberry tree.

During the 19th century a cottage was remodelled, extended with a block to the west and generally built up as a large house to accommodate him and his servants. The northern bays of the roadside block were built originally in the 17th century and formed a relatively humble timber framed structure with casement windows of a cottage. Added to it were an extension south and a wing to the west all covered with slate roofs. The front block is rendered but at the rear the walls are of red brick with tripartite sash windows.. In the



The mulberry tree in the Old Vicarage grounds



The north side of the church. A 1591 window, the original porch and limestone/flint walling.



18th and 19th century chest tombs in the churchyard



The Manor. The gable wall and the adjoining foreshortened south wing of 16th century origin

1990s it was again extended at the rear in a similar 19th century style with an infilling of the angle facing south west incorporating a new curved staircase and a main entrance in an octagonal entrance hall.

The red/brown brickwork, sash windows and slate roof of the late 20th century are all in-keeping with the 19th century work. Also alterations were carried out to the Street side where casement windows have been added to balance the irregular fenestration of the extended cottage.

The siting and design of the Parish Church is closely related to its history. After its dissolution in 1536 Easton Priory became the property of Sir Edward Seymour. The priory chapel of the Holy Trinity however continued in use by the village until Sir Edward provided an alternative for the parish in order to clear the priory site for his new mansion. The Elizabethan church of the Holy Trinity was built in 1591 on the site of the original parish church of St Mary's abandoned in 1369. Of unusually simple design it was almost square on plan, buttressed at the corners but with no distinct chancel and just simple 2, 3 and 4 light windows with four centred heads. It was built of limestone coursed with flint in three structural bays. A bell turret was supported over the west bay roof and a stone porch covered the doorway in the north wall.

In 1852 the church and churchyard was still the property of the heir to Sir Edward Seymour, the Marquis of Ailesbury and under his auspices it was extended to a design by T H Wyatt. The design included a further bay to the west, removal of the roof bell turret and the provision of a vestry bell tower built into the south wall at the east corner. The original 3 light east window was removed and a single Perpendicular style window inserted instead. The original east window stonework is probably now in position as the west window in the extension. The walling is a good match of the original but differs in that the limestone coursed with flint is ashlar whereas the original is faced rubble. The roof is entirely covered in 19th century plain clay tiles with crested clay ridge tiles.

The churchyard contains several chest tombs in two groups; the first is of four from the 18th century and the second is of three from the late 18th /early 19th century all relating to established families in the village. Several of the stone slabs that form the chests are cracked or displaced and some tombs are unevenly settled in the ground. The inscriptions are quite faint and the wording may be worth deciphering and placing on record in the church.

The house at Manor Farm like the church also has origins in the 16th century and until the 20th century was the farmhouse. It adjoins the churchyard and forms a boundary along the western side with several windows overlooking. This part of the house is the original 2 storey and attic gable with a wing that once extended further along the churchyard wall. In the early part of the 20th century during alterations the southern part of the old walls of flint and limestone rubble collapsed. It was decided not to rebuild but to stabilize the structure with a new south facing wall and extend the house to the west instead. As a consequence the house is now largely early 20th century and of a different plan from the original. It also has various alterations and extensions of the late 20th century and an exterior almost entirely painted over so that original fabric is almost indistinguishable from the modern.



Manor Farm. The 18th century cartshed



Manor Farm. Early 19th century stables



The row of cottages at the southern end of the village. No 11 is the farmhouse to Manor Farm.



Culley's Farm. A former dairy farm with traditional 19th century brick buildings that is now a stockyard attached to Easton Farm.

Manor Farm is a modern working farm with large concrete covered yards and framed sheeting clad buildings. There are however some surviving traditional buildings. The only listed building is the 18th century thatched cart-shed. This is timber framed of a remarkable nine bays long with an aisle along the south side. It is particularly important to the character of the group of buildings adjacent to the lane that includes the Elizabethan church.

Other 19th century buildings in the group include a carriage house and stable building of red brick and slate, a small workshop of buff Ailesbury Estate brick and slate and a former cart-horse stables with hayloft. The latter is further from the lane and acts as a screen on the south side of the Manor. It has 18th century origins but is largely of 19th century red brick with a plain tiled roof. Adjoining the modern buildings there is also a red brick bull pen and a traditional block converted to a dairy with alterations typical of the mid 20th century. Between these two is an interesting timber structured loading bay with a slate porch roof.

The farmhouse of the active Manor Farm is at No 11 The Street. This is a 2-storey building of roughcast on the first floor with a tiled roof and casement windows of the mid 20th century. The ground floor walls however are of traditional red facing brick and flint of a traditional cottage. The house is well sited at right angles to the lane at the head of a row of several cottages.

The cottages are white painted brick, thatched and closely related together facing the lane. Except for two concrete garages No.9 Oseland Cottage is the first in the row. It dates from the 15th century and was originally constructed of timber frame including two cruck trusses supporting the roof over a former open hall. The large flush dormer at the front lights an attic room on an inserted floor in this hall. Sarsen stones form the corners of the plinth wall that supported the timber frame. The boarded door and the casement windows are consistent and of an appropriate early 20th century pattern.

The only farm employee's cottage is among the listed cottages No. 4 detached and 7 and 8 a pair are all single storey and attic brick structures of the 18th century with thatched roofs and dormers.

Dairy House is at the lower end of the row but is a 19th century painted brick and tile former farmhouse. It has a symmetrical façade with casement windows and a gabled porch over the central doorway. There are gable chimneys to the ends of the steeply pitched plain clay tiled roofs of the front and rear wing. No.11, the cottages and Dairy House form a closely built and significant group at the bottom of the village.

Culley's Farm is an active stockyard attached to Easton Farm standing adjacent low ground at the end of the village. The farm buildings are an 'L' shaped plan group of traditional single storey brick and tile loose boxes, calf sheds and a former milking parlour. These are now largely redundant and behind them are framed and sheeted modern covered yards and feed storage barns that rise above the traditional roofs. Completing the enclosure of the yard is a modern framed and sheeted cattle shelter that backs on to the lane next to the wide modern gateway.

The traditional and modern buildings of the Culley's Farm group form an appropriate conclusion to a village with centuries of agricultural history that still retains active farms.



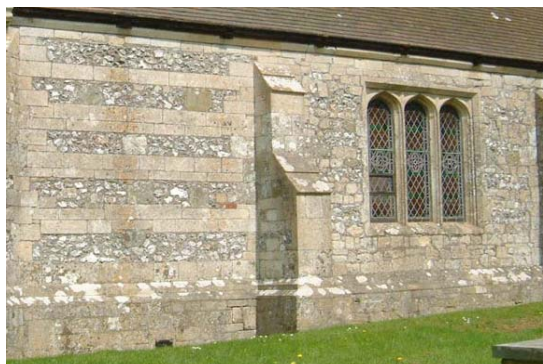
The White House. A traditional, probably 19th century cob wall with a thatched coping.



Wraey Cottage The timber frame of an extended 17th century thatched cottage.



Manor Farm. The 18th century timber frame aisle wall and roof structure of the cartshed



Limestone and flint in the church walls. 1852 to the left 1591 to the right

BUILDING MATERIALS AND DETAILS

Several of the building materials traditional in the village have at some time been grown, excavated or quarried from the ground in the locality.

WALLS

Traditional boundary walls and outbuildings were of cob, malmstone and the roofs of thatch. Walls were also founded on sarsen stone.

Cob is a combination of pebbles and fragments from the upper and middle strata of chalks with straw, dung and hair bound together in a lime slurry. It is laid in compacted layers, sometimes contained within a shuttering for low walls as in agricultural buildings and boundary walls. It is very vulnerable to softening and weakening through damp and frost action. It must be well founded on an impervious layer or base wall clear above the ground and sheltered by a roof with wide eaves. Few buildings with exterior walls of cob survive although interior cottage walls and exterior walls that are smooth rendered may conceal this material. Traditionally cob was common around the village but there is now only one known surviving example. This is a 30m long garden boundary wall south of The White House.

Malmstone is a soft grey-green rock from the lowest stratum of chalk above the Upper Greensand layer. It is a poor building stone, fissured and porous it is used only for the sheltered parts of walls and the lower chimney breasts of 17th century cottages. Much of what remains is likely to be internal and covered by render or brickwork to exclude penetrating damp.

Greensand stone is a hard stone of low porosity and found in boulders in both the upper and the lower Greensand strata. It is used for the plinth walls of cob, timber framed and brick buildings. Several examples survive but have usually been painted with pitch.

Sarsen Stone is a quartz sand stone, very hard and impervious. It is found in boulders on the chalk north of the vale sometimes known as 'grey weathers' or brown tinted by ferrous oxide.

Flint is found in chalk and sometimes in clay. It is very hard and non-porous. Traditionally used as a base-wall under cob and in wall panels in combination with a squared stone or brick for quoins and dressings. In Easton it is used knapped for walls at the Church in bands with limestone so that the broken flat surfaces are set to face outwards to form a smooth wall of particular quality.

Timber Frame

Surviving buildings of the 15th to the 17th century are largely made of timber frame where the frame was originally infilled with hazel wattle. The wattle is daubed in a mix of lime, dung, hair, grit and stone dust or sand and lime rendered. The most common are 17th century frames that are widely studded with large panels. Today surviving exposed timber frames may often be filled in with brick noggin. The bricks are painted or rendered to maintain the original appearance. Brick noggin however is heavier and of inferior thermal insulation value to the original.

Limestone is not found close to the village but is a stone quarried in the county for prestigious buildings. It is an easily worked freestone, usually Bath or Chilmark stone for plain walling, ashlar, and for dressings and mouldings. It has been used at the church for quoin stones, mouldings for doorways and windows and bands of infilling knapped flint.



Early 19th century brickwork and modern wide feather edged horizontal weather boarding



Easton House 1783. Red brick, blue header courses and a gauged flat rubbed brick arch



Easton House. New handmade plain clay tiles on top slope of the mansard roof. Old tiles below. Clay hip bonnet tiles on the dormers



Slate roofs on former Ailesbury Estate cottages of 1894. Diagonal brick flues of a chimney. The buff bricks of the base and one original flue are typical of the estate.

Brick is a universal material manufactured in the vale from the 17th century. Initially used sparingly for chimney stacks and impervious base-walls for timber-frame, malmstone and cob walls it became more readily available in the late 17th century for dressings in combination with local traditional materials and then in the 18th century for complete walls. The best brickwork from the mid 18th century includes vitrified blue headers built into solid walls of Flemish bond and soft red bricks rubbed to form gauged arches. Easton House façade is an example of this type of fine jointed brickwork from the late 18th century.

ROOFS

Thatch was the roof covering for most buildings in the village until the 19th century. Wheat was, and continues to be, grown over large areas of the parish and produced vast quantities of straw. Roofs could be regularly re-thatched at low cost. Any alternatives would have had to be brought in by cart. Historically all the farm houses, farm buildings and cottages were thatched in 'long straw' together with the copings for the cob walls about the village. Few examples remain in the traditional 'long straw' and thatch about the village is mainly of 'combed wheat reed'.

From the early 19th century slates and tiles have become increasingly prominent but in the 21st century thatched roofs continue to be a characteristic of the village.

The principles of design for extensions in thatch.

- Extensions to existing buildings in thatch should respect certain principles: Thatch should be pitched at 50 degrees or more and continue the local tradition of 'Long Straw' where existing .
- The layout plan should be of simple rectangular form without irregularities or acute angles. Round or curved plans are practicable in thatch but any inside radius must be generous.
- The creation of valleys and large dormer windows should be avoided.
- Single storey extensions added to the rear of a 2 storey building may be covered by a continuation of the main slope or a 'catslide'. The span of the extension must be limited to allow the pitch of the thatch to continue on down consistently.
- Thatch should not rest on an existing flat roof surface. Clear ventilation and drip space under eaves is important.
- Mortar weatherings to chimneys are preferred by thatchers to those in lead.

Balanced flue outlets should not be positioned so as to emerge from walls under a thatched eaves or close under a gable verge.

ROOFS

Plain clay tiles. Use of plain clay tiles in the village is comparatively recent and contemporary with the wide use of bricks in the 18th century. Examples in the village include Easton House where the tiles are handmade examples, the church, the Manor, Home Farm where they are patterned, the traditional farm buildings at Manor Farm and several cottages previously thatched that have suffered fire damage.

Welsh slates were brought in to the vale by canal barge via Bristol and coastal shipping from North Wales. Exported in vast quantities from the end of the 18th century, slate, at a reasonable cost, offered an alternative to thatch. It is a durable roof material requiring low maintenance, easy to lay, light in weight, and incombustible. Numerous examples of buildings in the village with roofs of slate include: The Old Vicarage, the former Methodist Chapel, the school and the late 19th. century cottages of the former Ailesbury Estate.



Unightly frontage A. The unofficial lay-by on the B3087 towards Milton Lilbourne.



Unightly frontage B. Insubstantial chain link fence to the north side of the playing field along the B3087 compares poorly with native hedge enclosures in most parts of the village



Unightly frontage C. Open fronted bungalow gardens and closely spaced drive entrances detract from the characteristic grass banks and traditional hedge enclosures.



Unightly frontage D. Exposed concrete 'Criblock' bank retaining structure at a modern drive entrance detracts from the natural sloping grass banks of the lane.

The 19th century farm buildings at Culleys Farm are roofed in slate and those at Easton Farm were probably also covered by slate.

Some 20th century houses and extensions are roofed in concrete plain and interlocking tiles but these materials are not appropriate to the village.

UNSIGHTLY AREAS or FRONTAGES with SUGGESTED ENHANCEMENT SOLUTIONS (SES) Capital letters A-K on the map on p. 2 show the locations.

A. On the B3087 the unofficial lay-by to the old road in the north of the village is a harbour for litter.

SES Build up the verge and return to the tarmac edge.

B. Insubstantial mesh fence to the north side of the playing field.

SES Plant a native hedgerow

C. Open frontages and frequent drive entrances to the bungalows.

SES In future similar redevelopments should have combined closely adjoining drive entrances into one. Plant native hedgerow up to and return into each side

D. 'Criblock' concrete retaining structure to the roadside bank.

SES Infill the voids in the concrete grid with loamy soil and compact until covered. Then extend reinforcing mesh over the compacted soil and peg. Turf over and irrigate until established. New gaps in the bank are best avoided but if necessary these should be wide enough to allow for natural angles of repose so that engineering solutions such as the above can be avoided.

E. Home Farm yard. Redundant 20th century buildings around a rough concrete yard that is unenclosed at the front to the Street

SES Clear the buildings and redevelop the site to re-establish the enclosure of the site against the Street and the grass bank.

F. Derelict land to the south of footpath 10 and north of Easton Farmyard.

SES Clear brambles, weeds, rubbish etc. and establish as meadow or appropriate cultivation. eg. Orchard, horticulture etc.

G. Brick retaining wall to a combined drive entrance.

SES Clear away wall and excavate Greensand banks back to natural angle of repose. Also extend laurel hedge on north side to form semi enclosing bellmouth

H. Brookefield. Reconstructed stone retaining wall and open fronted garden.

SES Clear away retaining wall and re-establish grass bank at natural angle of repose. Plant native hedgerow and trees along the top. Form drive entrance bellmouth with natural sloping grass banks and return sides with hedging

I. Manor Farm. The overgrown site of a former great barn.

SES Clear away concrete block remnants of the north wall and establish the area as part of an adjoining meadow or for possible horticultural use etc.



*Unsightly area. E Home Farm yard.
Redundant non traditional buildings and
unenclosed rough concrete yard surfacing*



*Easton Farm Unsightly area J. The overgrown
area opposite Dairy House*



*The Old Post Office. A cottage roofed in tiles
that was originally thatched.*



The thatched timber outbuilding at 'Crossways'

J. Easton Farm. Formerly a garden to Dairy House opposite is an overgrown area to the south of red brick and tile cottages No.5 and 6.

SES Clear ground of nettles and scrub

K. The street near Culleys Farm. There is poor drainage, both surface water and sewerage. Land south of the buildings is wet and overgrown with nettles and scrub. This is probably due to the slow rate of flow and high water levels of the stream possibly because of debris in or artificial dams down stream. In the lane foul water gulleys backup and overflow. This is likely to be due to an inadequate diameter main sewer flowing east- west towards Pewsey

SES Parish Council action to seek advice from the Environment Agency, instigate negotiations with riparian owners downstream to re-establish natural stream levels. Bring the inadequacy of the sewer to the attention of the Wessex Water Authority. Clear the nettles etc. ditto as for Area **J**

PRESERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT

The village has a tranquil and rural character that is vulnerable to erosion by the 21st century way of life and by residents and visitors unaware of country lore.

Increasing car and delivery vehicle traffic can cause the soft edged narrow lane to be eroded. Widening the metalled surface or reinforcing the banks to steepen them with concrete retaining walls or kerbs should not be an option. The sloping grass banks are an intrinsic part of the rural character of the street and should not be excavated back to form a wider carriageway or breached for additional vehicular accesses.

All buildings in the Conservation Area are protected from demolition without consent. Most thatched buildings are protected from alteration by their listed status but there are several unlisted buildings and walls that may be altered without specific consent. To preserve the character of the Conservation Area it is vital that when these structures require attention they should be carefully repaired in matching traditional materials and original detail.

Outbuildings of traditional design and materials should as far as possible be preserved unaltered including their doors and windows. Traditional walling materials should not be rendered or painted for the first time.

Brick and stone walls and stone steps are an asset to the street scene and should be maintained as existing. Hedges and paling fences are also traditional enclosures of cottage gardens in the village. Open fronted and rockery gardens are alien to the village

The continued use and care of the village church and school are essential to village character.

Only a very small congregation currently support the church. If the church building is to be preserved for the use of the village its community should assist the Church authorities in its maintenance.

The school is well attended by about 40 pupils with some from outside the village. At such time as the premises are extended to meet rising accommodation standards the design and materials of any new buildings should be more appropriate to the village vernacular than the existing 'mobile' classroom block.



A typical corner of the Conservation Area. A thatched cottage with a paling fence and a hedge in flower on a grass bank.

PRESERVATION OF EXISTING CHARACTER.

In addition to buildings in the village the grass banks, trees, hedgerows and shrubs in the lane are a major part of the scene. Although trees of over a certain girth are protected in Conservation Areas, with permission these should be lopped like smaller trees and shrubs so as not to detract from the hedgerows or cause a hazard in and the lane. Non native species of evergreen tree, shrub and ivy detract from the village scene and become an eyesore if allowed to spread or grow too high.

Changes to the natural environment both private and public may occur through neglect, lack of expertise or attention to traditional rural practices. Trees overhanging the street should be lopped when appropriate and grass on the banks cut at least annually.

The importance of preserving the meadow containing the burial ground to the east of the lane as an historical site and as a setting for the parish church is vital to the historic and rural character of the village.

THE PLANNING CONTEXT

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a duty on local planning authorities to determine which parts of their area are "Areas of Special Architectural or Historic Interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance" and to designate them as Conservation Areas. The Act, and advice given in Planning Policy Guidance Note15 - Planning and the Historic Environment, states that the local planning authority should formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of all Conservation Areas and this assessment, published as the Easton Royal Conservation Area Statement is part of the process. This Conservation Area Statement was adopted by the Council as Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) on 16 September 2004. SPG provides additional information on the interpretation and implementation policies and proposals contained in the Local Plan. been undertaken during the preparation of this Statement. Paragraph 3.16 of PPG12 – Development Plans, also states that adequate consultations is a requirement for adoption of SPG. The Council considers that the consultation undertaken meets with obligations set out in PPG12. The Kennet Local Plan 2001-2011 has been adopted by the Council and became operative on 30th April 2004. and provides background information for the detailed interpretation of policies contained in the Replacement Local Plan, particularly Policies PD1, HH5, HH6, HH8, HC5, HC22, HC32a, ED9, ED11a, ED11b, ED12, ED14, ED26, HH12, NR5, NR6, NR7 and HC34.



The natural environment of tree, hedge and bank predominates over buildings in many parts of the village.



Easton Farm. Traditional buildings



Manor Farm. The listed cart shed. Historic and thatched but agriculturally redundant.



The church and churchyard trees from Manor Farm yard

SUMMARY

The village is no longer a self-sufficient agricultural community but many of its characteristics survive and have adapted well to modern life. The village street though narrow and distinctly rural over most its length is quite adequate for slow and careful access to properties along its length.

For the most part historic cottages have been adapted unobtrusively to modern living. Some former redundant estate outbuildings have also been successfully retained as houses. Active farmyards still lend the village a distinctly bucolic character but their historic and traditional outbuildings are under threat. In order to preserve them a new role should be found as they become redundant.

The church and its setting including the Priory site opposite are unique and of particular historic interest.

CONCLUSIONS

There are no obvious gaps for infilling or new development in depth within the Conservation Area. The character of the village would be adversely affected by further subdivision of plots fronting the lanes or breaches in the roadside banks by estate roads and shared private drives. Though suitable in principle for limited development because of the Primary School facility there may only be areas of redundant existing buildings that would be suitable for redevelopment. Any impact on the village's strong rural character and historic environment is to be avoided.

External changes to traditional buildings would adversely affect village character particularly through the application of standard solutions for repair or for minor alterations.

The natural environment must be managed to contain its otherwise unruly growth particularly in the public domain.

The historic site of the former Easton Priory should remain as undeveloped agricultural land preferably meadow.

Preservation of the 'status quo' is the preferred policy of conservation.

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The Victoria County History
KDC Landscape Assessment Conservation Strategy

CONSULTATIONS

Easton Royal Parish Council
Wiltshire County Council
The Director of Environmental Services
The County Archaeologist
Wiltshire Buildings Record
The Campaign to Protect Rural England
English Heritage

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25
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