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This document was adopted by the Council's Cabinet on 19th October 2006.

1.1 St Neots is a town in Huntingdonshire located approximately 12km south of Huntingdon [Map ref. TL5287/2880] (see Map 1). It is comprised of a number of ancient settlements, taking its name from the largest of these. These settlements are situated on either side of the River Great Ouse. Those on the east bank were in the historic county of Huntingdonshire, whilst those on the west bank were in Bedfordshire. The present town was formed when the county boundary was extended westwards in 1965 and the whole area was incorporated into Cambridgeshire in the 1972-4 local government reorganisation. The Civil Parish contains 1033 hectares (2552 acres), and the population in 2001 was 26,510 (25,510 in 1991).¹

Map 1. The Geographical Setting of St Neots within Huntingdonshire



1.2 The modern town of St Neots lies within the valley of the River Great Ouse on either side of the river. The valley floor at this point is flat and open, being approximately 1500 metres wide and liable to flooding, particularly on the eastern side. The valley bottom is about 14 metres Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) with the land on each side rising to 30 metres. The highest point is at Duloe Hill on the west which stands at 33 metres.

1.3 The underlying geology is Oxford Clay overlaid with Boulder Clay. As mentioned above, the river has carved out a wide flat valley, which has eroded away the Boulder Clay and deposited river alluvium. This contains gravels with terraces on either side (1st and 2nd terrace to the east and 2nd terrace on the west). These gravels are rich in archaeological remains associated in particular with early human habitation.

1.4 The focus of the town and its component historical settlement centres is an ancient river crossing. The largest of these settlements, St Neots, lies on the east bank of this crossing and gives its name to the modern town. Its origins lie in a Saxon monastic foundation and later market. The Saxon monastery was founded on lands within the parish of Eynesbury, an older settlement on the east side of the river. Both of these settlements were within the county of Huntingdonshire prior to its incorporation into Cambridgeshire in 1974.

1.5 On the western bridgehead is the hamlet of Eaton Ford, part of the old civil parish of Eaton Socon. The village of Eaton Socon itself lies a little to the south on the west bank of the Ouse. Prior to 1961, when the old civil parish of Eaton Socon was divided, both these settlements were in Bedfordshire.

1.6 Of the four historic settlements that form the modern town, that is St Neots, Eynesbury, Eaton Socon and Eaton Ford all but the latter had existing conservation areas prior to the recent boundary review. The new boundaries broaden these and include the hamlets of Eaton Ford and Crosshall.

1.7 There are sixty-one Conservation Areas in Huntingdonshire², including the (now extended) areas within the St Neots district mentioned above. It is Huntingdonshire District Council's intention to produce new, or updated character assessments for all designated conservation areas as part of a rolling programme. The Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a duty upon local planning authorities to formulate proposals for conserving and enhancing conservation areas. Following consultation and approval the Character Assessment for the St Neots district will carry weight as a 'material consideration' in planning decisions.

1.8 Conservation Areas are designated for their "special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance". This means that consideration is given to the evolution of the community as well as the physical environment within a conservation area. Street patterns, the architectural quality of the buildings, open spaces, trees and other tangible evidence relating to the social and economic development of a settlement are given due weight. In this way every aspect of the historic environment of present day St Neots has been taken into account.³

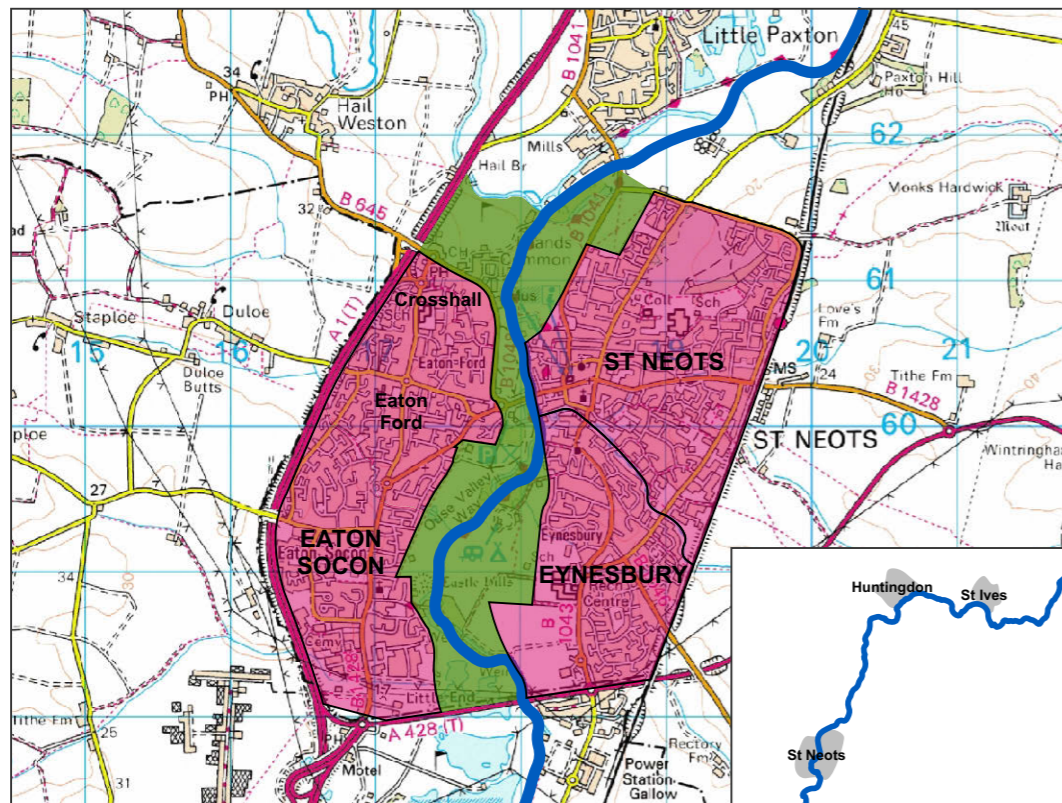
1.9 Like other market towns in Huntingdonshire, St Neots' built environment developed slowly from the Middle Ages until just after the Second World War. New development during that period was normally contained within the existing settlement pattern, even where the changes were socially and economically significant (for example, the enclosure of the open fields in the 18th and 19th centuries).

1.10 However, after about 1950 peripheral housing and industrial estates were developed that departed from this traditional development pattern. For this reason the character analysis for foundational settlements within St Neots town draw on the settlement morphology prior to 1950.⁴

1.11 In places elements within the Conservation Area boundaries may need improvement or be ripe for re-development. Being in the conservation area will help developers and planners to ensure that improvements will enhance the character of the town along the lines laid down in this document.

- 1.12 Conservation area designation also places some restrictions on minor development works that would, otherwise, be permitted without formal planning applications being made. Further restrictions may be introduced by the Local Planning Authority (or the Secretary of State) that effectively withdraw other permitted development rights in all or part of a conservation area in order to conserve the quality of the area.
- 1.13 Furthermore, all trees growing within the boundaries of a conservation area are protected and additionally permission must be sought prior to the demolition of most buildings.

Map 2. Map of St Neots and District showing main structural elements (as at May 2006).



1. St Neots is the most populous town in Cambridgeshire after Cambridge City. Historically its population growth is hard to determine because population sizes of its component settlements were recorded separately, and often in combination with other settlements not within the area of the modern town.
2. Prior to the conflation of St. Neots, Eynesbury and Eaton Socon conservation areas there were sixty-three designated areas.
3. Department of the Environment, Planning Policy Guidance 15, Article 4.17 1994
4. The design code in this document relates to the historic building tradition found in the St Neots area prior to 1950.

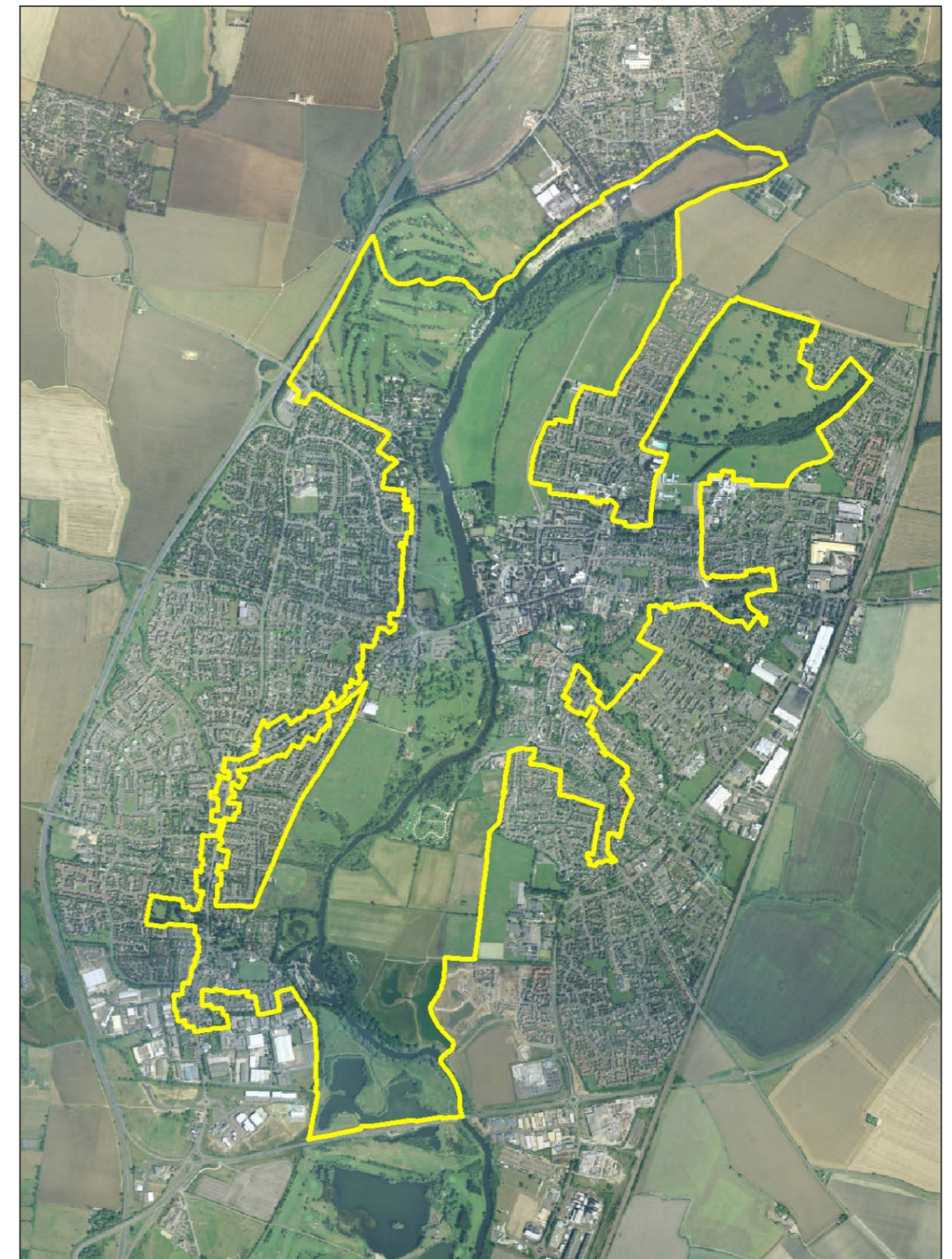
Statement of Significance

- 1.14 This statement applies to all the historic settlements now forming the town of St Neots. These settlements are as follows:
- 1.15 St Neots is a town with an ancient market (chartered 1130) in association with an abbey founded in Saxon times (c. 972-5). Originally part of the ecclesiastical Parish of Eynesbury, it became a parish in its own right in 1204. The wealth of the place was built on trade, particularly upon the opening up of navigation on the Great Ouse in 1639. St Neots has two Scheduled Ancient Monuments: the site of the Priory (SAM CB101) and the Maltings (SAM CB180). There are 97 buildings on the National List, of which one (the Parish Church of St Mary) is Grade 1. It has had a conservation area for 34 years, first being designated in November 1971. The village of Eynesbury has its origins in Saxon times, although the site of the modern village lies to the south of the late Saxon settlement. There are 42 listed buildings in the village, with the Parish Church of St Mary being Grade II*. The first conservation area at Eynesbury was designated on 16th February 1976.
- 1.16 Eaton Socon was recorded in Domesday Book as a manorial estate, with its origin in Saxon times. Between the site of the modern village and the river lie some earthworks associated with a castle built during the Anarchy at the time of Stephan and Matilda by Geoffrey of Mandeville. The village economy was boosted during the early modern period by the coach traffic along the Great North Road, along which the settlement lies. Eaton Socon has one Scheduled Ancient Monument, being the Hillings (the site of the 12th century castle SAM 20434). There are 30 listed buildings in the settlement. The first conservation area for Eaton Socon was designated in May 1991.
- 1.17 Eaton Ford and Crosshall were hamlets within the civil Parish of Eaton Socon until the boundary changes of 1965 when they were transferred to St. Neots. Eaton Ford developed at the bridgehead opposite St Neots at the point where the alternative route for the Great North Road from Tempsford through St Neots crossed back over the River Ouse. Eaton Ford has 14 historic buildings on the National List.
- 1.18 There were 40 tree preservation orders within the area prior to designation. Such orders only applied to trees considered to be at risk at the time and all trees within the Conservation Area are now protected. A survey of the most significant trees was made prior to designation.

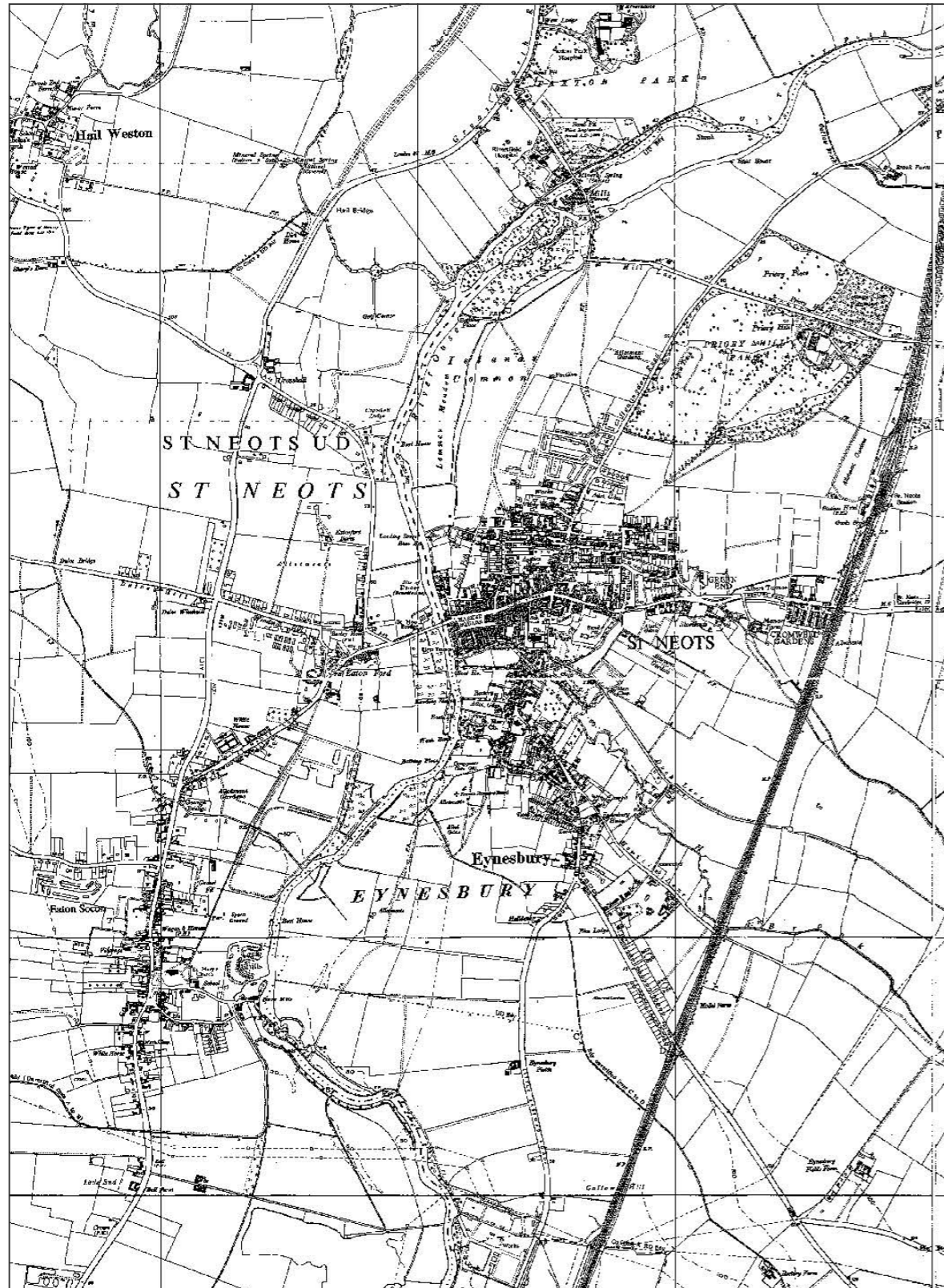
The Recording of Spatial Information

- 1.19 All the information collected on the settlements within the St Neots district for use in this character assessment and displayed in map form have been recorded within Arch View. This is a Geographical Information System (GIS) that allows spatial information to be permanently stored and then displayed at suitable levels of detail and scales as required. The maps used in this document to illustrate local character etc have been chosen to fit the needs of the document but may be enlarged subsequently if more detail needs to be displayed.

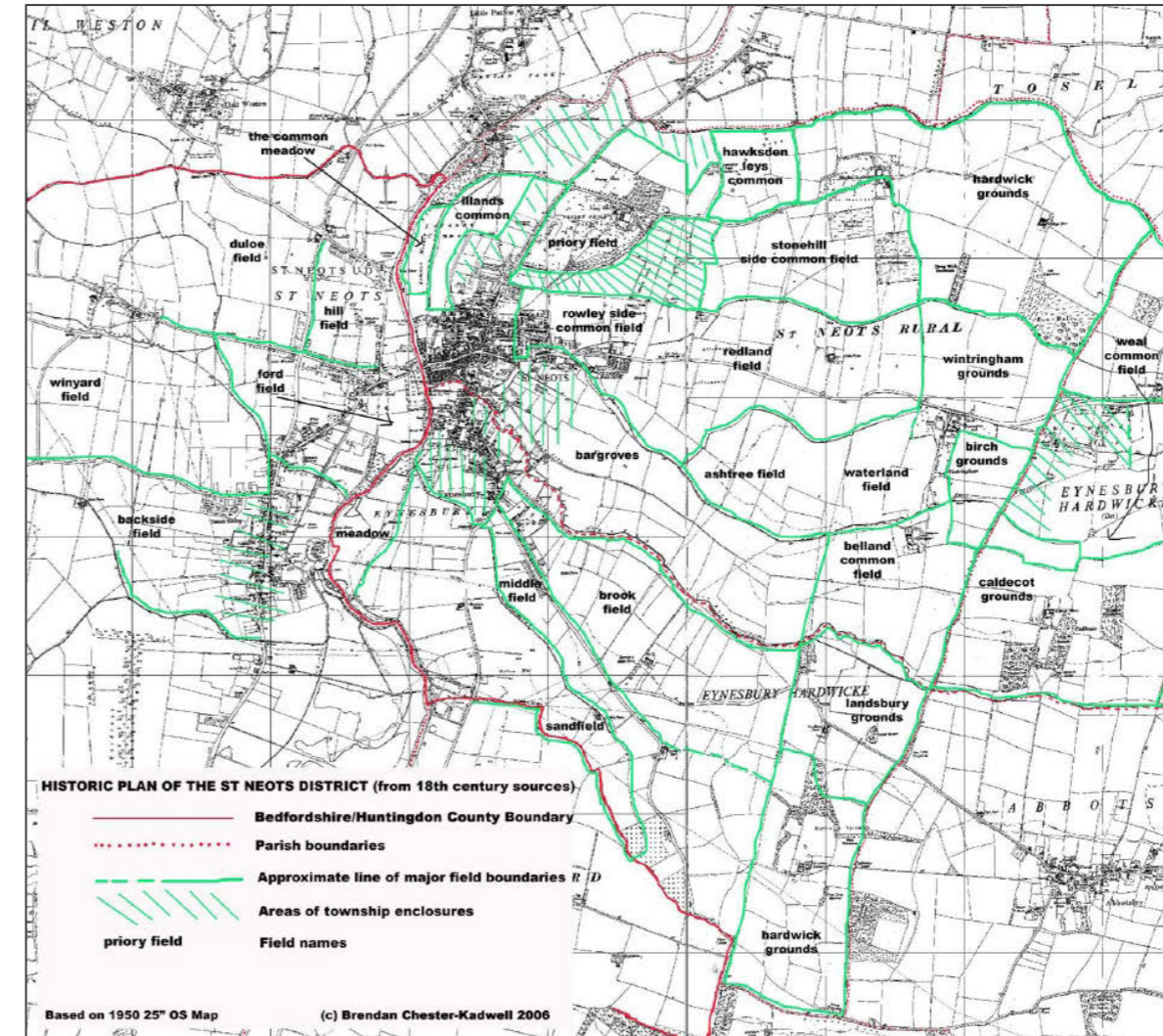
Map 3. Aerial Photograph showing the St Neots and District Conservation Area Boudary



Map 4. 1950 Historic Map of St Neots (based on 25" Ordnance Survey data)



Map 5. Historic Map of the St Neots District showing open fields and other topographical features



- 2.1** Although the modern town of St Neots is an agglomeration of a number of previously separate historic settlements, the River Great Ouse has influenced the development of each and the river crossing at Eaton Ford provided a principal focus for them. Until the 17th century all the settlements were mainly agricultural and their economy and social structure reflected this. During the course of the 17th and 18th centuries the balance of the economy moved in favour of trade and transport, reflecting the settlements' geographical location.
- 2.2** The settlement morphology is a complex one and the main threads are summarised below. The development of the two settlements on the east bank of the river, St Neots and Eynesbury, are particularly closely interrelated. The settlements on the west bank, Eaton Socon, Eaton Ford and Crosshall were all part of the settlement pattern of a single parish prior to the local government changes of 1965 and retain a particular character of their own.
- 2.3** However, the economic (and to some degree the social) life of both groups of settlements started to converge from the end of the 16th century and transportation and trade became the determining factor for settlements on both sides of the Great Ouse at this point.
- 2.4 The Early Medieval Settlement Pattern**
- The alluvial soils and gravel terraces of the Ouse valley have attracted human habitation since prehistoric times. Present settlement patterns, however, have their origins in the English Settlement of the early Middle Ages (although it is not possible to say to what extent this was influenced by earlier settlement). There is little archaeological evidence to indicate where the first Saxon settlers built their homesteads, but by late Saxon times (roughly post the 10th century) there is clear evidence for the location of the core settlements on both sides of the river.
- 2.5** East of the river the early medieval parish of Eynesbury included all the area now in the civil parish of St Neots. The Late Saxon settlement was located north of the Hen Brook, west of Fox Brook roughly as far as Church Street and north to Cambridge Street/High Street. The assumption is that the 10th century monastic foundation would have occupied a similar site to the later Priory, and although the former may have attracted some settlement away from the main manorial site there is no evidence for this before the re-founding of St Neots' priory after the Conquest. Therefore, the actual position of the vill of Eynesbury (as mentioned in Domesday) was most likely to have been north of Hen Brook.
- 2.6** West of the river a Late Saxon settlement has been identified under the remains of the 12th century castle between present day Eaton Socon and the river. This suggests that either the settlement was moved to make way for the castle, or had already moved to the present village site. It was not unusual for Saxon settlements to change position several times before becoming stabilised in their present day situation and both Eaton Socon and Eynesbury conform to this trend. There is topographical evidence to support the theory that both Eaton Socon and Eynesbury are 12th century planned villages.

2.7 Later Medieval Settlement Morphology

For whatever reason the priory at St Neots was re-founded in the 11th century after the Norman Conquest. The new foundation was a daughter house of the great French Benedictine monastery at Bec. At first it provided many benefits to the locality and by 1113 the priory of St Neots was granted a charter for its new settlement outside the precinct gates. The weekly market authorised by Henry I was augmented with a fair under Henry II and in 1180 the first bridge was built.

2.8 The establishment of St Neots as an economically successful settlement by the monks of the Priory led to disputes with the lay proprietor of the Manor of Eynesbury. During the course of the 12th century the parish of Eynesbury was divided and a new parish for the Priory lands was established, which was completed in 1204 with the final separation of the tithes. It is now believed that during this period Eynesbury village was gradually re-located south of Hen Brook to its present location and a new parish church built.

2.9 From the late thirteenth century and throughout the fourteenth century the Priory suffered financially. As an alien priory during the Hundred Years War (that is, as a religious house belonging to a mother house outside the French lands controlled by the King of England) its income could be seized by the Crown to help pay for the war. Effectively the priory was ruined and in 1409 it was given its independence by Bec. Subsequently the Priory slowly re-establishing its financial solvency by extending the Market Place and thus increasing its income.

2.10 Eynesbury and Eaton Socon, during the course of the later Middle Ages, continued to develop as fairly typical Huntingdonshire settlements nucleated about their respective Parish Churches and surrounded by their Common Fields. The territory of Eaton Socon parish, however, was quite extensive and a number of hamlets had become established over the years away from the village location of Eaton Socon itself. Eaton Ford and Crosshall have survived the transition into Cambridgeshire.

2.11 Post-Medieval Development

In 1536 the Priory at St Neots was dissolved and the manor passed to the Crown. Despite the success of the market and trade generally the township St Neots did not become a borough. It remained essentially an agricultural settlement dependant for its governance on manorial organisation until the local government reforms of the 19th century.

2.12 In 1631 St Neots passed to the Earls of Sandwich (who also eventually acquired Eynesbury) whilst the Dukes of Bedford owned the manor of Eaton Socon. During the course of the 17th and 18th centuries land ownership was consolidated and agricultural developments led to the enclosure of the great medieval common fields by the turn of the 19th century. By 1757 at least one of the St. Neots common fields (Priory Field) was in single ownership, and the others in the parish seem to have been enclosed by 1770. The common fields in Eynesbury were enclosed by Act of Parliament in 1797 and those in Eaton Socon about the same time. The tithes were commuted in St. Neots in 1770, in Eaton Socon in 1795 and in Eynesbury two years later. See map 5 for an illustration of how complex the common field system and piecemeal enclosure of land had become prior to the more radical Parliamentary Inclosure of the later 18th century.

2.13 Improvements and developments in transportation from the first half of the 17th century onwards greatly improved the wealth of the district. St. Neots benefited in particular from the opening up of the river to navigation in 1630, as can be attested by the quality of the architecture of the merchant premises around the Market Square.

2.14 Improvements in the Great North Road, the development of the stagecoach system and the introduction of the Royal Mail in the 18th century benefitted both Eaton Socon and St. Neots. In fact, south of St. Neots the Great North Road divided with one section crossing the Ouse at Tempsford and passing through Eaton Socon. A second route past through St. Neots before crossing the Ouse over the town bridge and rejoining the North Road at Crosshall.

2.15 19th Century Developments

2.16 The railway opened at St. Neots on 1850. The coming of the railway saw the diminution of both long distance road and river traffic. It also opened up the possibility of new markets and commercial opportunities. The Corn Exchange opened in 1863 and a livestock market in the 1890's. By the 1880's there were extensive industries in the District including brewing, corn milling, engineering, a gas works, paper mill and brick and tile manufacture.

2.17 New housing was built for the workers as well as more spacious housing for the better off. Agriculture was of continued importance, but the service industries associated with it became more centralised. Characteristically the local communities became more interdependent economically as well as socially.

2.18 The medieval administrative arrangements that had survived for so long proved inadequate for contemporary conditions. Eventually political changes were set in train that eventually led, in 1965, to the creation of the modern administrative Town of St. Neots



Huntingdon Street, St Neots



Avenue Road, St Neots



Market Square, St Neots



Market Square, St Neots



New Street, St Neots



New Street, St Neots

- 3.1 Because the town of St Neots originates in the coming together of a number of ancient settlements it has a complex morphology and distinct neighbourhoods. The overall sense of place is derived from the interaction of these elements.
- 3.2 When the first conservation areas were designated for the component settlements now comprising St Neots their boundaries were drawn to include the highest density of listed buildings in the core of each of the historic areas. The new, consolidated, conservation area has been expanded to include the most significant elements associated with these settlements reflecting the growth and development of St Neots since the Middle Ages.
- 3.3 This is the result of a major re-assessment of the town and a re-appraisal of the architectural and historic merits of many aspects of the component settlements. The resulting boundary is quite broad and falls naturally into defined localities, similar to those identified in the Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment .
- 3.4 These localities correspond to the historical settlements referred to above, Map 2, page 5. Together they form the new St Neots Conservation Area, which replaces the earlier, and more localised conservation areas. Therefore, assessment and interpretation of the new and enlarged conservation area (in accordance with the statutory and regulatory requirements set by government and English Heritage) needs to take account of the whole area. Its division into localities and neighbourhoods is intended only to make analysis and understanding more accessible and does not imply that each locality would pass all tests set by statute and regulation as if it were a self-contained conservation area in itself.
- 3.5 Table 1 lists the localities within the Conservation Area (as shown on map 2) and the subdivision of these localities into neighbourhoods.
- 3.6 This table also gives a written overview of the general character of each locality. This general description is expanded into a detailed analysis of each locality in a plan and table format under the following headings:

A: Character analysis

A plan based analysis giving a graphic description of each locality. The symbols used on the maps are described more fully in figure 1, page 12.

B: Spatial Analysis

Within each locality the most significant relationships between built and open spaces are analysed in terms of their key spatial features. This includes building lines, green features and mass etc.

C: The main building types

These are illustrated on the accompanying plan for each locality. The building types help to define the character of each of the neighbourhoods and need to be taken into account when planning enhancements and future development. A full description for each type of building is given in Annex A., page 36.

D: Building Details and Materials

Material. Summary of materials used in the various areas. This illustrates the range of materials most commonly used. It will show where material choice is limited and where more variety may be used.

Detail. This presents some of the architectural detail relevant to each area, for example the most common window and door details present.

E: Design Code

The intention of the Design Code is to establish a generic set of 'principles' that underpin the built character of the different historic localities within St Neots. By identifying detailed information on characteristics in a quantifiable way it is possible to use this information positively in the design of new development.

The study areas correspond with the 'localities' and 'neighbourhoods' defined within the Character Statement (see table 1, page 11.).

The Design Code does not contain an exhaustive set of design 'rules' but it does identify defining characteristics.

The Code is developed in a series of matrices. Each surveyed area is looked at in the following way:

Grain. This is an overview of the pattern of development. It looks at the general characteristics of an area's layout, particularly the arrangement of building plots. This will identify some of the fundamental layout issues that contribute to the place's character.

Plot. Having established the general characteristics of the area, the plot analysis looks in more detail at the individual streets and building plots. The typical dimensions of plots in the street and the typical position of the building within that plot (for example, set forward, set back, filling the width of the plot or detached within it etc).

Visual Quality. This matrix introduces more detail in terms of streetscene quality i.e. What the place looks like in three dimensions.

Design Code Summary. Each locality is summarised to draw out some of the key characteristics which define this part of the Conservation Area.

Table 1. Localities & Neighbourhoods within the Conservation Area

Locality	1. St Neots	2. Eynesbury	3. The Eatons
Neighbourhoods	<p>1a: Island Common/meadow 1b: Priory Park 1c: Medieval core settlement area 1d: Fox & Hen brooks 1e: 19th & early 20th century urban extensions</p>	<p>2a: Eynesbury riverside 2b: Core settlement area</p>	<p>3a: Eaton Socon riverside 3b: Eaton Ford riverside 3c: Crosshall 3d: The Eatons historic route</p>
Overview	<p>The St Neots market square and riverfront are the memorable images of the town. The historic architecture is on the scale of other Huntingdonshire market towns and demonstrates St Neots' importance as a trading and commercial centre from the 17th century onwards. Island Common and Priory Park (previously part of Priory Common Field) were both significant elements within the rural economy of St Neots, demonstrating the importance of agriculture to the settlement up until the middle of the 20th century. Late 19th and early 20th century expansion to the original settlement lay to the north and east of the medieval core. These neighbourhoods are typified by regular, rectangular street patterns laid out within earlier town enclosures.</p>	<p>Eynesbury retains its village quality although it is all but surrounded by modern housing development. The area between the Parish Church and the Green is particularly memorable. The original 12th century village had a very open texture and this has not been completely lost. However, the historic settlement area is now isolated from the rural context that until the 20th century provided its economic base. The conservation area includes some good examples of social housing that was a feature of Eynesbury's early 20th century morphology. The style, materials and layout of this estate are characteristic of the area.</p> <p>Eynesbury's meadows along the east bank of the Ouse are still a significant feature of the settlement</p>	<p>Eaton Socon and Eaton Ford retain a rural quality. Eaton Socon (a memorable area) still feels like a village with the Parish Church at its centre besides a green. The northward extension of the historic core illustrates its past history as a stopover on the Great North Road. The St Neots Road leads the Union Workhouse on its way through Eaton Ford, a hamlet that developed at the bridgehead west of the Ouse crossing point.</p> <p>Crosshall was a small hamlet associated with an important manor house. Situated on a hill overlooking the Ouse Valley it now has a somewhat suburban character, but with fine views over the river. The river frontage from Crosshall to Eaton Ford is significant and accessible meadowland.</p>
Enhancements	<p>No further encroachments should be allowed into Island Common or Priory Park and both would benefit from further planting and management of shelterbelts. In the built up areas maintenance and general improvement of the historic fabric is essential. Generally the remaining backlands should be protected (particularly the older burgages of the core settlement). However, where the backlands have been opened up along Tebbuts Road and Priory Lane structural improvements are needed to a very poor urban environment currently dominated by car parks on what was historically an area of small town closes. Improved street signage, shop front design and (outside the Market Square) street furniture are desirable to enhance the quality of the space. The Market Square is still dominated by car parking. Generally priority should be given to pedestrian over vehicular access throughout.</p>	<p>The built up area of Eynesbury could be enhanced with better street signage, street furniture and attention to architectural details such as shop fronts and windows etc.</p> <p>Traffic management, including parking could be improved and attention should be paid to preference for pedestrian movement over that for cars. The area between the Parish Church and the Green should be a priority.</p> <p>The transition between the historic village core and the riverside needs to be re-appraised with a view to environmental enhancement. This is particularly important, as this is the last remaining settlement edge giving on to open land.</p> <p>Improved access to the riverside down to Eaton Mill should be encouraged.</p>	<p>Modern housing development between the Eatons' historic route and the riverside is an unwelcome intrusion and ways should be found to lessen its impact. No further development should be allowed along the meadowland west of the river within the conservation area.</p> <p>Enhancements to the street furniture, signage the treatment of pavements and parking arrangements should be attended to. Architectural detail, including shop fronts would also benefit by a programme of enhancement.</p> <p>More might be made of the area around the Anarchy castle site and the Mill at Eaton Socon, including improved pedestrian access at this point.</p> <p>Public land along Crosshall Road is an amenity well cared for, but it could benefit from a revised management regime.</p>

Map 6. The Conservation Area and its Sub Divisions (see Table 1.)

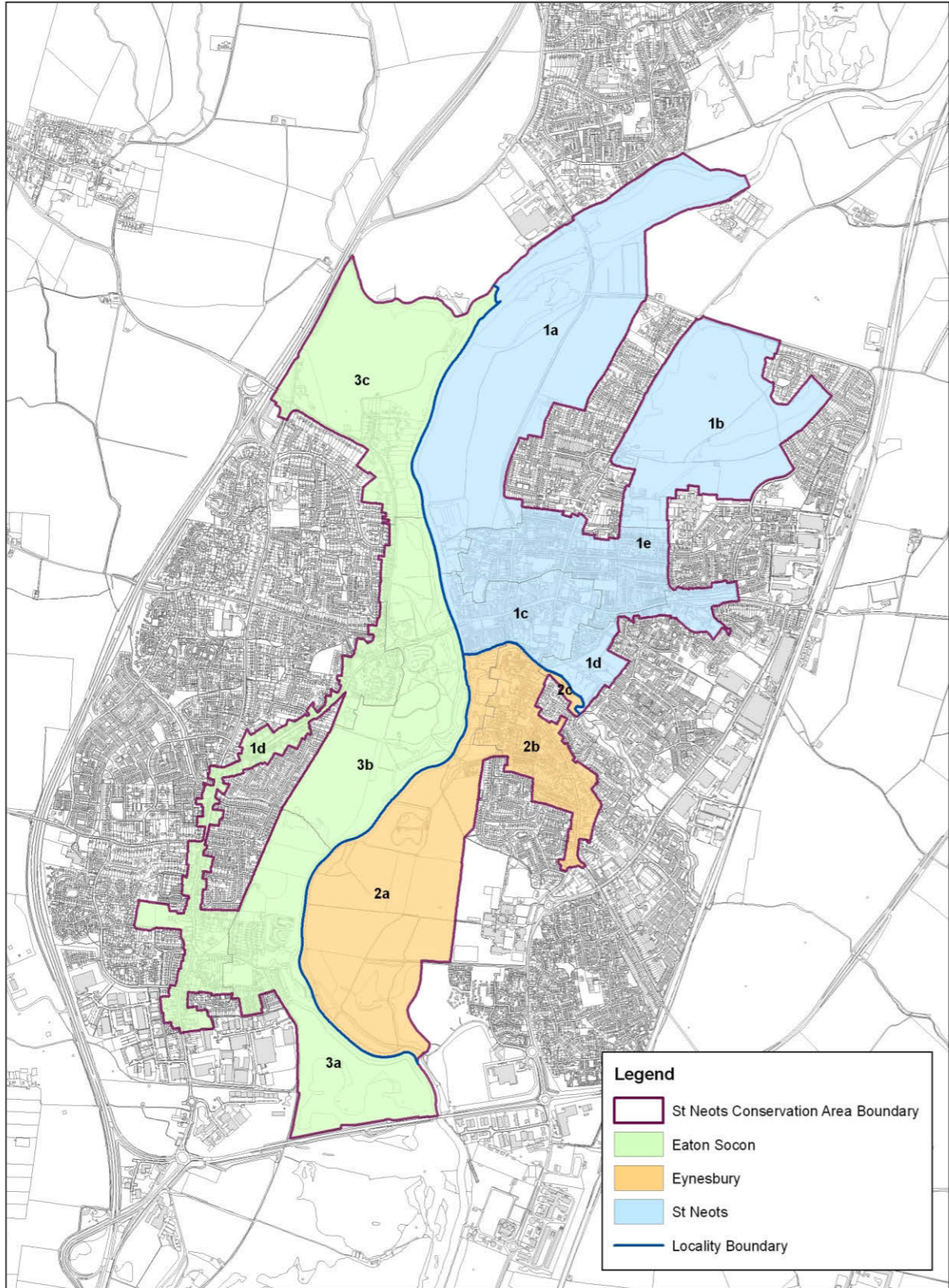
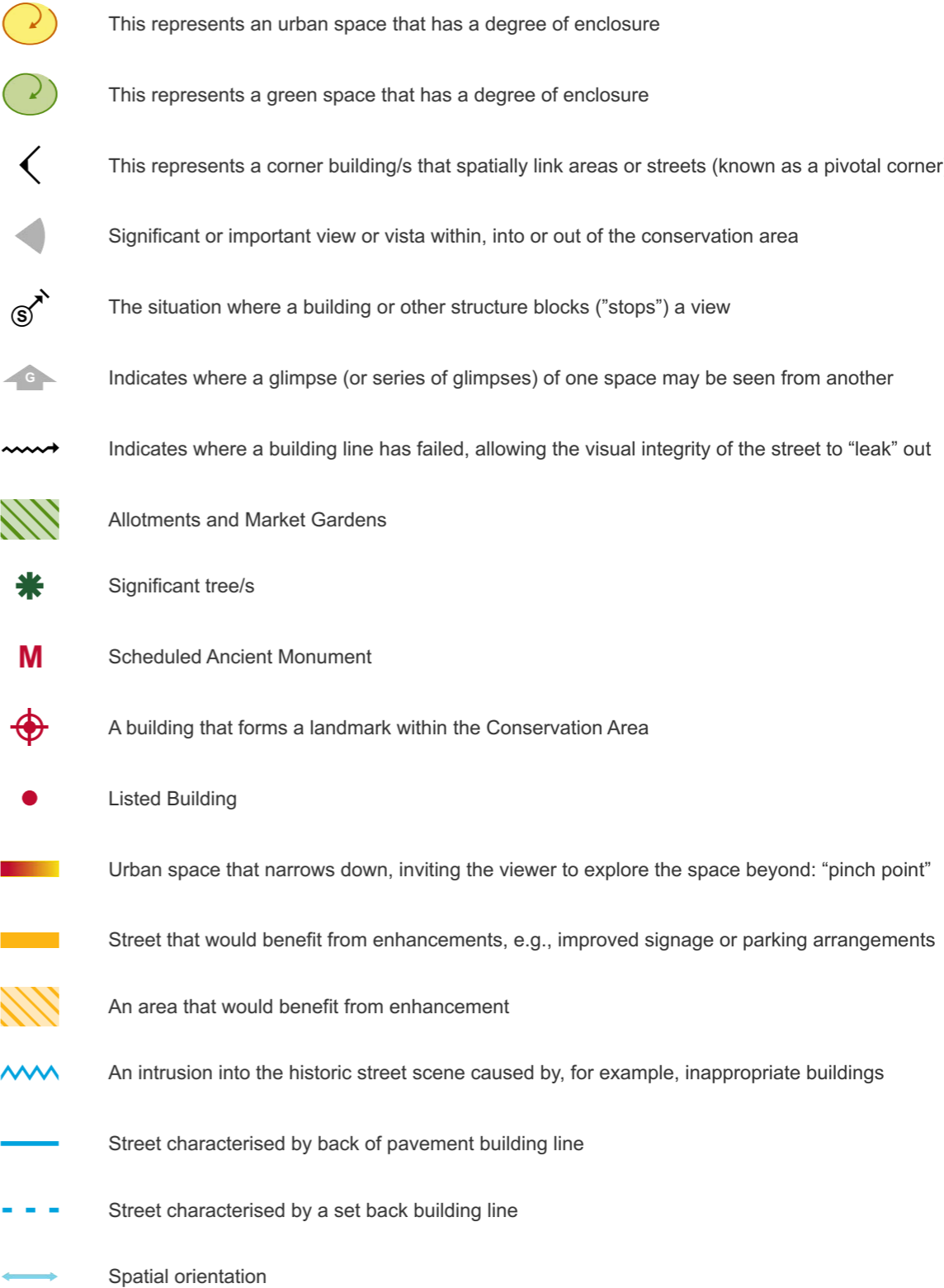


Figure 1. Symbols used on the analysis plans



1a St Neots Character Analysis

Medieval Core Settlement Area (neighbourhood 1c)

The heart of this area is the Market Square [A]. Laid out by the monks of St. Neots' Priory its economic activity formed the basis for the wealth of this religious house. The street pattern and the land divisions (burgage plots) are principally medieval, although the architecture is predominantly 17th and 18th century, with some 19th century additions (together, one has to say, with a few rather unfortunate 20th century buildings).

Glimpses through to the backlands (principally on the southern side) of both the Market Square and the High Street facades are of significance [B]. The northern side of both the Market Square and the High Street have suffered most from modern infill, but the old Cross Keys coaching inn (now a shopping mall) and the off-beat non-conformist church (the latter set back from the street with a small garden laid out in front of it) compensate to some degree.

This part of the settlement is built within the angle formed by the River Great Ouse and the Hen Brook. Its water frontages are not apparent from within the town and the element of surprise where glimpses allow sight of them is one of its charming features [C].

There are spectacular views up and down the Ouse valley from the modern road bridge [D]. It is, therefore an even greater tragedy that permission was given for the demolition of its 17th century predecessor about forty years ago. Fortunately the river frontages and the riparian lands on either side of the Ouse have been shown greater respect.

Priory Lane formed the late medieval entrance to the Priory itself (now sadly gone without a trace, including the Priory Gate, still in existence in the 18th century). New Street is a post-medieval street off the Market Square and gave access to newly formed closes between the town and the Common. The boundaries of these enclosures can still be traced within the built environment.

The crossroads where Church Street, Huntingdon Street, High Street and Cambridge Street meet is also of great antiquity and it is believed that it was in this vicinity that the original Saxon settlement lay [E]. The northern limit of this settlement was almost certainly along the line of Cambridge Street. Cambridge Street has some good buildings, including Hall Place and Bradshaw House, which formed the eastern most buildings of any note in the post-medieval town [F]. Further enhancements could only benefit this important area. To the south of the crossroads is the Parish Church of St. Mary with its splendid perpendicular tower that dominates the town's skyline. This area is characterised by a more open feel (despite some rather over scaled development lurking behind some ancient walls next to the churchyard). There is also an array of mature trees that add grace to this part of the town.

Brook Street connects Church Street with South Street, the latter forming the eastern boundary of the Market Square. Brook Street is charming with some excellent town houses near the church, including the imposing Brook House. Humbler housing is situated opposite open views of Hen Brook at the Market Square end. The view across the brook is less open since some recent development on the flood plain. What is left of the open ground should be protected [G].

Hen Brook & Fox Brook (neighbourhood 1d)

Both these brooks are tributaries of the Ouse and provide green corridors for the settlements on the east side of the river. Hen Brook (the old boundary between Eynesbury and St Neots) is rather hidden from the town, apart from where is bridged at St. Mary's Street between the two parish churches and, as mentioned above, from Brook Street. But it is a gem and there is easy access to it along Cemetery Road. As the name of the road suggests, this is where the Town cemetery is situated [H].

Fox brook flows into the Hen Brook at this point and is historically significant for a number of reasons. It is flanked by one of the few remaining allotments at this point (a reminder of much more extensive ones that used to flourish in the neighbourhood). A little to the north, where it takes a 90 degree turn away from Cambridge Street it once formed the eastern boundary of the Late Saxon settlement [N].

Further to the east along Cambridge Street Fox Brook emerges from a gore of open land known as Green End [I]. There was once a spring here that gave its name to the higher land to the southeast known as Springhill. The stream was diverted at this point earlier in the 20th century to allow Cambridge Street to be straightened. It was here that the town's ash-pit was situated prior to the introduction of main's drainage.

Green End retains its historical role as one of the green assets of St Neots as well as providing a pleasant gateway into the ancient settlement. The modern housing along its northern edge enhance the appearance of the green and give it a semi-rural appearance.

Late 19th and Early 20th Century Urban Extensions (neighbourhood 1e)

Like many of the larger Huntingdonshire settlements St. Neots experienced major extension of the built environment at this time, in fact nearly doubling the its area. However, in absolute terms the extensions were modest and the result is a rather charming series of streets with their houses constructed from local brick. Many retain original detailing, but these are fast disappearing with the increased use of plastic windows and doors.

One of the first residential development was Russell Street to the north of the established settlement, with some industrial development in parallel Bedford Street with the latter sporting the gas works, corn mill and malthouse. Then, to the east there was East Street (with better classes of houses on the north side than the south). All substantially completed by 1880. There was also limited building to the west of New Street during the same period (for example, West Street).

The more spaciouly planned developments tended to be on the eastern side of the existing settlement (at least initially). Streets such as Avenue Road and Kings Road (the former having been laid out before 1880 but still only partially built twenty years later) [J]. Shaftsbury Avenue was an early 20th century development and Cambridge Gardens is an exceptionally fine example of a between the Wars council estate mentioned in Pevsner (but now being eroded by home improvements).

Even though the building form of these later developments was very different to the older building style it still respected the historic form of the landscape into which it was inserted. So that ancient footpaths, and the boundaries of fields more recently cut out of the old Common Fields can still be traced on the ground.

1a. St Neots Character Analysis

St Neots Conservation Area Character Assessment



A. St Neots Market



C. Water frontage behind the Market Square



B. View into backlands, High Street



D. View from Town Bridge



E. St Neots Cross



F. Bradshaw House and Hall Place, Cambridge Street



G. View South over Hen Brook



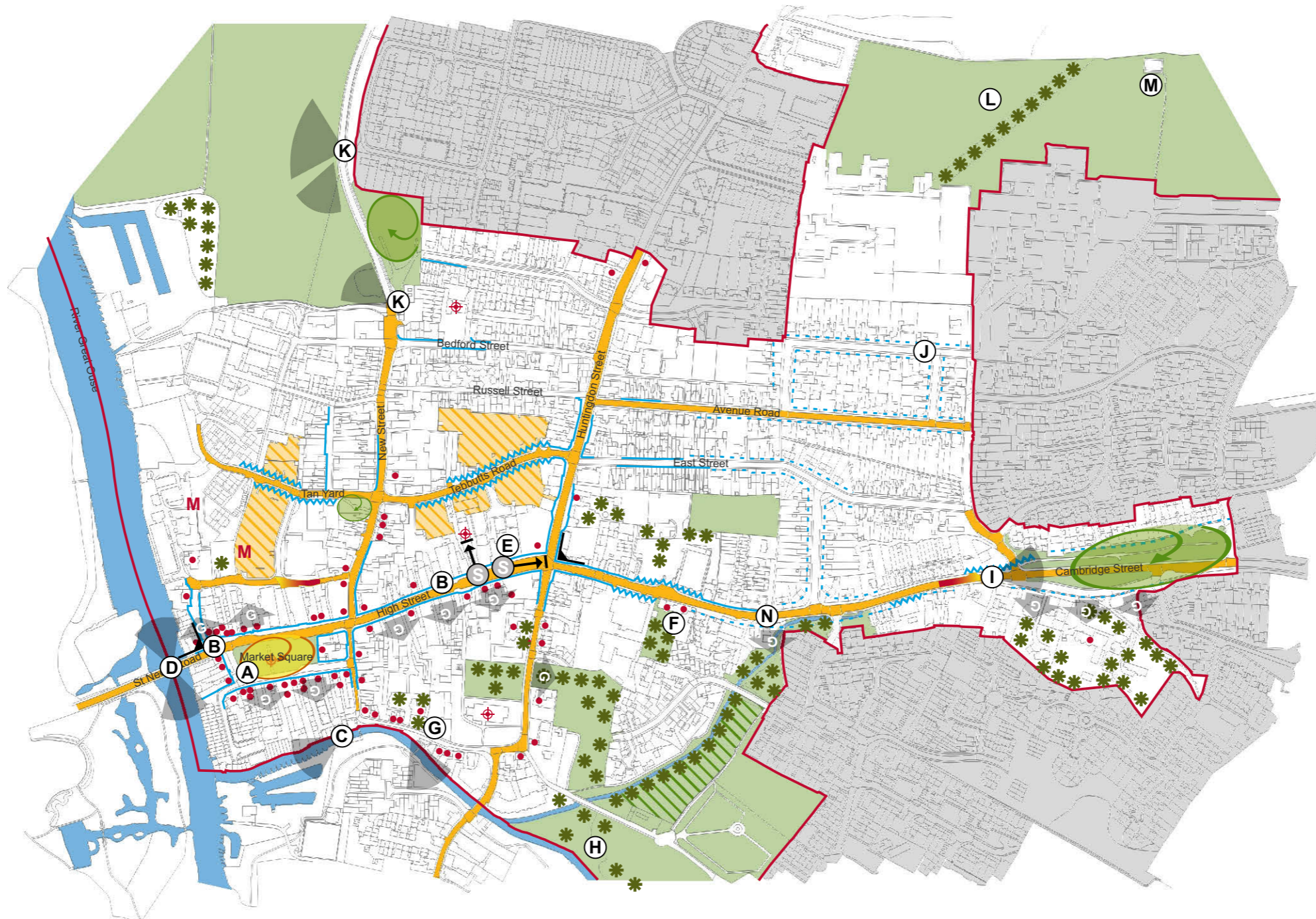
H. Town Cemetery and Hen Brook



I. Green End



J. Kings Street



1a St Neots Character Analysis

Island Common and Common Meadow (neighbourhood 1a)

Island Common (with the Common Meadow beyond) forms a green gateway into the historic centre of the town from the north so that the traditional relationship between the rural and the urban has been preserved at this point. This green belt, with the higher land that can be viewed across the river creates a strong rural setting to the town [K].

Priory Park (neighbourhood 1b)

Priory Park lies to the east of the Huntingdon Road and is shielded from it by a shelterbelt. Until recently the land to the west was also undeveloped as far as the Crescent Estate and therefore open to Island Common beyond. Historically the land of Priory Park and the Common were only separated by town closes, which all together formed a rural approach to the settlement. The loss of these closes to housing within the last sixty years has fragmented this and eroded the historic settlement edge. It is important that what remains of the openness of the link between Priory Park and the town is maintained as a series of green enclosures with pedestrian access, particularly the fine avenue of trees that crosses this stretch [L].

Priory Park, itself, is the remnant of the southern half of one of St Neots great common fields "Priory Field". This field originally extended north of Priory Park Road and east of the railway line (part of the successor parkland, as originally laid out, was also located north of the road). The field was divided by a substantial baulk that lay roughly along the line of Priory Hill Road. The existing parkland contains the relicts of two older landscapes. The first is the ridge and furrow of the Common Field; the second is the boundaries established by enclosure of the field, typically marked by standing oaks that grew along (for the main part) lost hedgerows [M].



K. View over Island Common

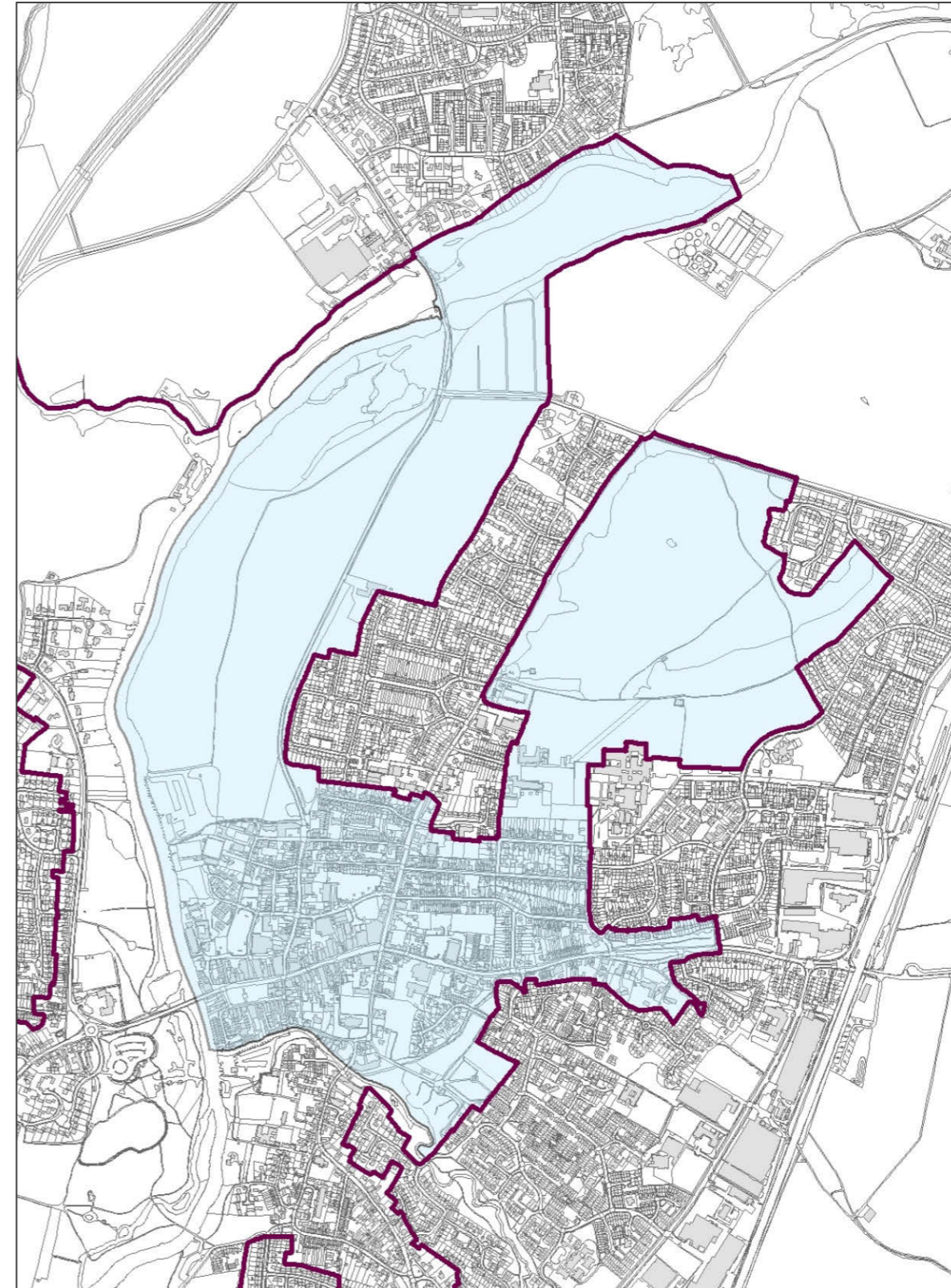


L. Avenue, south of Priory Park



M. Priory Park showing ridge and furrow and relict hedge lines

St Neots Locality Map

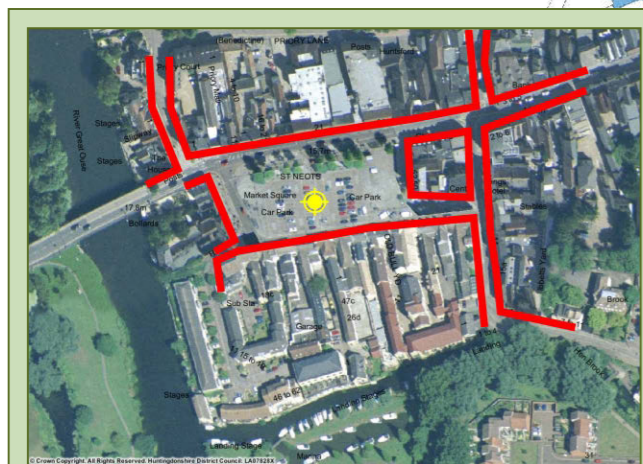


1b. St Neots Spatial Analysis

The principal spatial asset within the settlement is the Market Square, historically the chief source for its wealth. Otherwise it is the spaces that define the settlement edges, where the built environment interacts with the rural matrix, which defines the settlement's morphology and completes the sense of place.



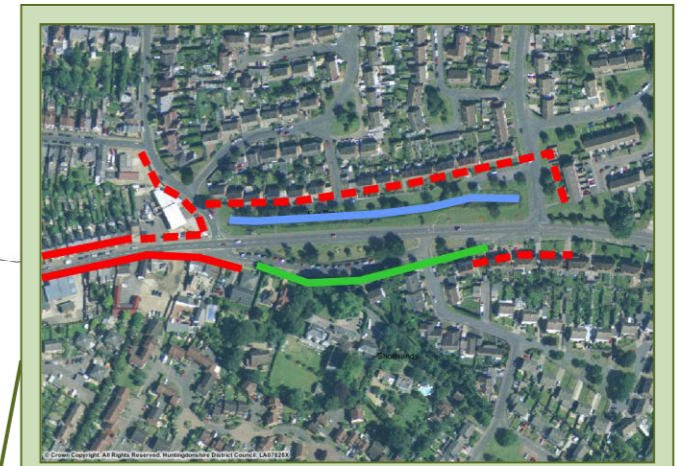
South end of Island Common. This important space (like Priory Park to the east) defines the northern limit of the built environment. It retains its historic function as common land dedicated to pastoral uses and connects the town to the river through a series of connected spaces.



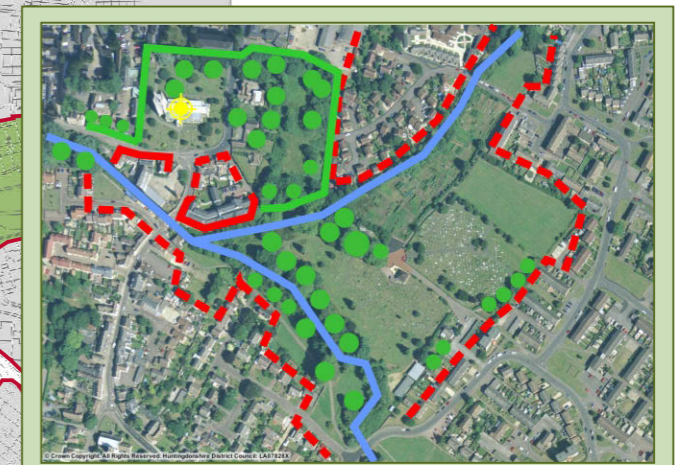
The Market Square. A large irregular rectangle, the Market Square is confined within continuous facades of historic buildings erected to promote trade, commerce and industry. It is a controlled space in every sense, which demands the full attention of those that enter it.



Key	
	Continuous built form
	Broken built form
	Green edges
	Watercourses
	Trees enclosing space
	Landmark buildings



Green End. Green End is at the western portal of the historic settlement where the Cambridge Road runs parallel with Fox Brook. Even though both have been straightened the original alignment is still discernible. The end result has been to preserve this historically significant space. The new dwellings on the north side reinforce the space.



The Confluence of the Hen and Fox Brooks. This is a key area within the settlement that is divided naturally into interconnecting spaces demonstrating different qualities. However, its openness, greens and mature trees characterise it throughout. The part nearest the town centre (west of Fox Brook) contains the Church with the old Vicarage and its gardens. This is also the location of the Late Saxon settlement. East of Fox Brook the spaces are reserved for the cemetery and allotments. This provides a varied and semi-rural feel, softened as it is by standards of mature trees. The banks of hen Brook form a linear urban park.



1c. St Neots Building Type Analysis

There is a wide range of building types within the built environment of St. Neots. Some neighbourhoods are more varied than others, usually the older ones as core settlement areas tend to contain a wider variety of social and economic diversity.

Medieval Core Settlement Area (neighbourhood 1c)

This is the most diverse area for building types within the settlement. There is a good example of a medieval high status timber framed house in the High Street (T1A) with the possibility of others now lying behind 16th and 17th century brick facades. There is a sprinkling of vernacular cottages, particularly on the perimeters of the core settlement as would be expected in a major agricultural settlement of this age (T1B). There are some fine examples of 18th to 19th century town houses, particularly around the Market Square (T2). Other building types include T3; T6 (for example Brook House); T9; T10A and T10B; T11B (The Priory Centre, in this case designed to reflect the industrial building that it replaced).



Fox and Hen Brooks (neighbourhood 1d)

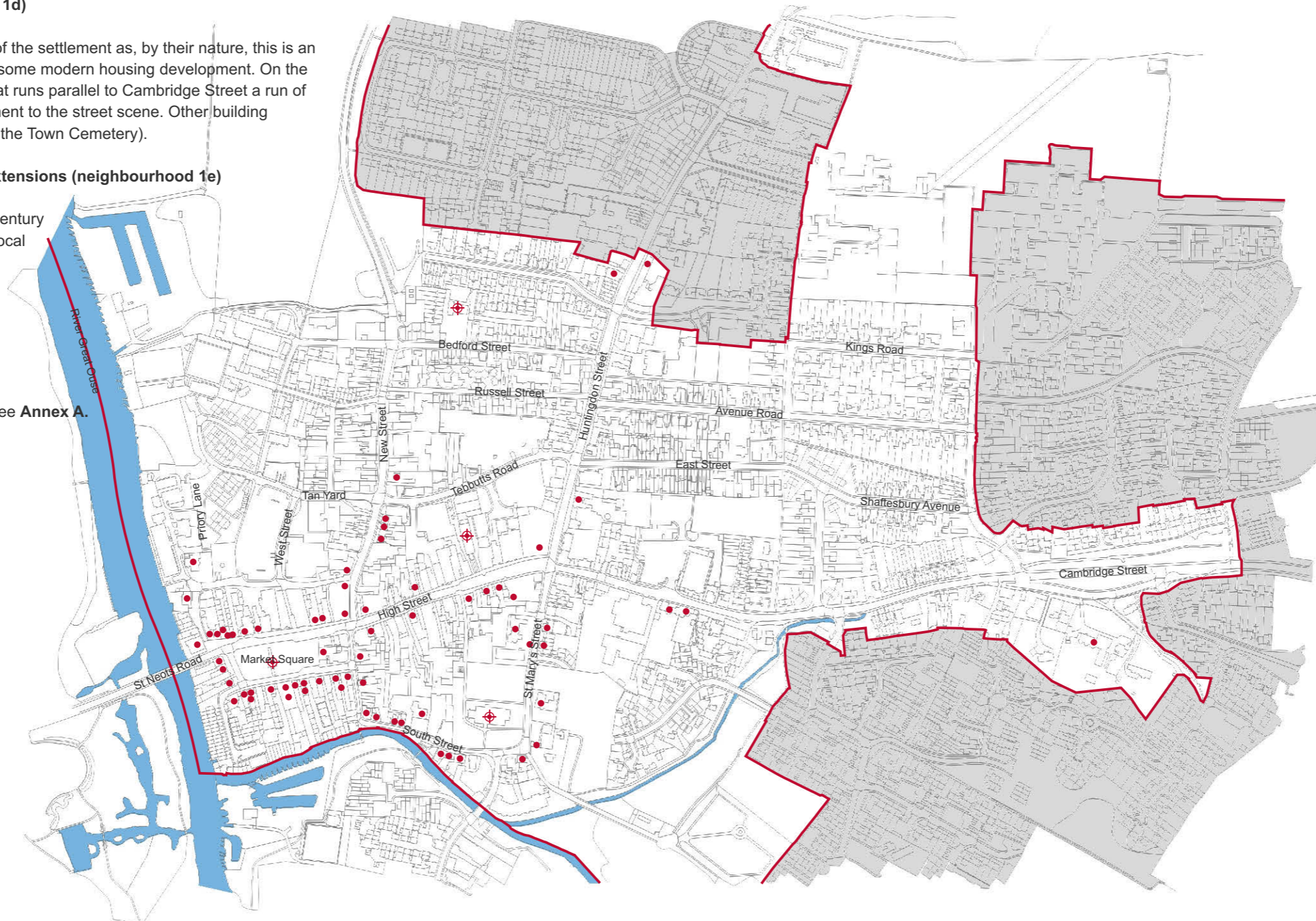
There are few buildings in this element of the settlement as, by their nature, this is an area of open spaces. However, there is some modern housing development. On the north side of the stretch of Fox Brook that runs parallel to Cambridge Street a run of modern houses provides a positive element to the street scene. Other building types include T6 (Shortsands); T11B (at the Town Cemetery).



19th and Early 20th Century Urban Extensions (neighbourhood 1e)

This area contains 19th and early 20th century workers housing (originally attached to local industrial/commercial concerns, few of whose buildings remain today) and some higher status suburban streets from the same period. Building types include T2 (opposite Common); T3; T4; T7B (Cambridge Gardens); T9A; T10B.

N.B. For a definition of buildings types see Annex A.



1d. St Neots Building Details and Materials

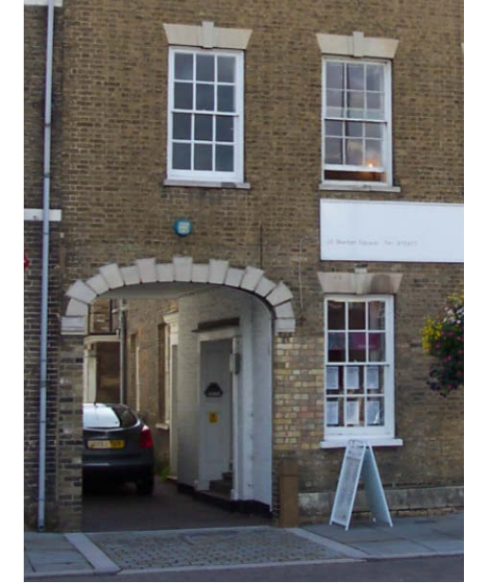
St Neots is blessed with a wide range of building periods which bring colour and interest to the built environment. Although each neighbourhood has its own distinctive set of features the older parts of the settlement possess the richer variety of styles and materials.



The High Street. Here the architectural richness of the area is reinforced by its commercial function, introducing shop-fronts and signage. In some cases later facades mask the intrinsic age of the buildings and the detailing frequently reflects the commercial aspirations of a former age. Many shop-fronts would benefit from a more integrated approach to design.



Late 19th & early 20th century expansion reflects the variety of materials becoming available during this period. Generally the architecture reflects the standardised approach of speculative terrace or semi-detached development. Humbler housing of the time illustrates an honest functionality whilst some of the better quality houses indulge in ornate embellishments.







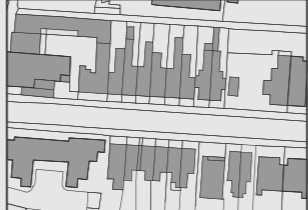


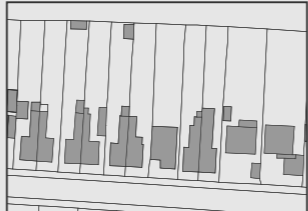




The Market Square. This is an area of grander architecture mainly of the 18th and 19th centuries. The range of materials is more subdued and the scale and form of detailing more measured. The generally regular facades are punctuated by formal access ways to the yards that lie behind.



The older town houses are influenced by the neo-classical with regular facades and emphasised doorways. Occasionally these are softened by vernacular features such as dormer windows or the practical restrictions imposed by older building behind later facades.

1e. St Neots Design Code

Grain	Plot	Visual quality	Summary
Neighbourhood streets: Market Square, High Street and South Street			
 <p>Tight form of development with buildings rising from long narrow plots and grouped along the highway edge, giving a continuous frontage</p>	 <p>Streets range in width, opening onto the Market Square. Plots are strip-like, being long and narrow. No setbacks ensure a coherent and continuous frontage.</p>	 <p>Block sizes vary in width. Eaves heights are constant but ridge heights and roof pitches vary to provide an interesting roofscape. Heights are generally 2 storey except on Market Square where there are a number of notable 3 storey buildings.</p>	<p>Development in this area is characterised by continuous built form at the back edge of the pavement, based on long, relatively narrow plots perpendicular to the thoroughfares. This creates a harder, enclosed form of development. The buildings become notably grander in the Market Square, where the predominant building material is buff and some red brick with slate or clay tile, but there is much render and painted brick throughout the area with a sprinkling of timber frame. The traditional character of this locality is at risk where recent development does not respect traditional forms, details and building materials. These are shopping streets but shopfronts are frequently poorly designed or over intrusive.</p>
Neighbourhood streets: St Mary's Street, St Mary's Church Environs and Brook Street			
 <p>The grain of this area is characterised by a few larger buildings set within generous plots. More coherent street pattern at the margins.</p>	 <p>Plots are generous in size and shape. Occasional setbacks provide opportunities for landscaping and mature tree growth</p>	 <p>The dominant building is the parish church, but there are a number of grand houses and other buildings, mostly set in large plots or surrounded by open space. Materials and detailing are of a high quality with a strong building hierarchy.</p>	<p>Most notable in this area is the spacious arrangement of buildings. St Mary's Street is characterised by high garden walls at the back edge of the pavement. Mature trees also create a green and spacious effect. This area contrasts interestingly with the burgrave plots of the High St that adjoin it on the north side. Brook Street has a variety of buildings, from humber cottages to a large grand house. There is an important open aspect on the south side. Building materials are varied but tend to be of good quality, as does the detailing. The rubble walls of the church are offset by fine stone detailing and the ashlar tower is very fine. The greatest threat to the quality of this area is the erosion of the spaciousness. Extensions, infill proposals and development that harms open views or a sense of space should be resisted.</p>
Neighbourhood streets: Huntingdon Street and New Street (lower)			
 <p>Tight form of development with buildings grouped along the pavement edge.</p>	 <p>These streets are enclosed by the plots which are frequently long and narrow except where larger plots have been formed by combining smaller ones.</p>	 <p>The arrangement of buildings at, or towards, the front of their plots gives these streets an enclosed feel. Buildings are generally simple, of gault or buff brick with slate roofs. Most are 2 storeys with similar eaves and ridges.</p>	<p>Building frontages tend to be regular terraces with variety in the facades of the small shops and commercial premises. Plot sizes are smaller and shorter than in the High Street and these are clearly 'lesser' streets, although they retain the dense urban grain. Materials tend to be more uniform than in High Street and Market Square with a predominance of gault brick and slate making for a more subdued palette. Threats to these streets could come from further erosion of the existing historic shop fronts and inappropriate infill. In particular modern bricks should be avoided where they conflict with the historic varieties present. Roofing materials should be chosen with care. Eaves and ridgelines should not break the current uniformity of the streetscape, although the occasional setback might add further interest.</p>
Neighbourhood streets: Priory Lane and Riverside development			
 <p>Much of the riverside development is open-grained with a variety of building types and sizes.</p>	 <p>No regular pattern of plot sizes - partly caused by the breakdown of original curtilage boundaries.</p>	 <p>This area has a mix of building types and uses in an area previously known for its industry. Sited on the bank of the Great Ouse, it retains its enclosed set of urban spaces and vernacular domestic architecture.</p>	<p>This area was originally within the precinct of St Neots Priory. After the Dissolution it was eventually turned over to industry with maltings, brewery and foundries on the site. Each of the buildings in this area is unique. Important considerations are the scale of the buildings, their massing and the urban enclosed spaces that they create. Materials display a subdued palette of buff and light red brick with a predominance of plain clay tiles. Car parking and the destruction of some of the original boundary walls means that much of the containment that should be present leaks out and this should be addressed where re-development occurs. The building of the Waitrose store has greatly reduced the small scale, 'backland' grain.</p>

Grain	Plot	Visual quality	Summary
Neighbourhood streets: Green End			
 <p>Buildings to the north create a coherent edge to the green, with a softer edge on the southern side.</p>	 <p>Plot sizes and buildings on the north side are regular, framing the open green. Plots on the south side are larger and more irregular.</p>	 <p>It is the feeling of linear space that predominates here as Cambridge Street opens out into what has become an urban green. Travelling into St Neots from the east, the building line funnels in, emphasising the approach into the denser built form of the town centre.</p>	<p>Green End is a significant open space at the gateway to the original settlement. The line of the old road gives an air of mystery which is strengthened by the mature planting. This is an important open space historically and visually. It also has some fine buildings as well as some more functional ones of all ages. Correspondingly, building materials vary. The area would benefit from some street enhancements, particularly along its rather neglected old route. The colour of the existing filling station is too intrusive for this location. The type of planting is critical to the atmosphere of the green and the precedence here is for a more natural countryside affect. This would reflect its history and be in keeping with older planting schemes. Action should be taken to mitigate the effects of traffic (particularly speed and noise).</p>
Neighbourhood streets: Shaftesbury Avenue, Cambridge Street, Crescent Terrace, Avenue Road (West), Bedford Street, New Street (upper) and East Street			
 <p>Tight form of development. Buildings clustered at the front of regular, narrow plots with some set back as long, for example, Shaftesbury Avenue.</p>	 <p>Plots tend to be narrow with some buildings set at the edge of the highway, presenting coherent frontages.</p>	 <p>The visual appearance of these streets is one of enclosure, created by the narrow highways, edge of pavement development or narrow front gardens. The predominant building type is two storey, terraced cottages. There is little planting and the regularity of eaves and roofline give a regimented feel.</p>	<p>There are a number of these types of streets which built up as the population grew (and the demand for better housing increased) in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Typically they share a rather limited colour palette and design form: predominantly two storey, narrow fronted terraced cottages. Mainly built from local buff brick and imported slate. Building details in these areas are under threat from replacement plastic windows and doors. Action is needed to halt and even reverse this trend. Parking is another problem as these roads were not designed for the parking of cars. More sympathetic street furniture in keeping with the age of the development would be helpful. Where there are narrow front gardens the treatment of boundaries is significant. There is an argument for encouraging the planting of privet hedges, the replacement of lost railings or post and chain.</p>
Neighbourhood streets: Avenue Road (east) and King Street			
 <p>Regular, but more spacious, grain. Buildings set back from the edge of the pavement amidst gardens.</p>	 <p>Large plots (some divided) with mainly detached or semi-detached dwellings set well within their plots.</p>	 <p>Detached and semi-detached houses built at the turn of the 19th and 20th century typify this area. The plots are reasonably spacious, with mature planting. There is variety in the style of building because of the piecemeal development of the plots.</p>	<p>These are visually more spacious streets than many others of similar date. The houses, set back in their plots, have mature gardens with some fine trees. Style and materials vary, according to the date of the building, but buff brick and slate predominate. The variety of style, height, and position on the plot adds interest and surprise. With more space for off road parking, the streets retain an elegance not often found elsewhere in the town. It would be desirable to reinstate original railings and trees along the frontages. Many of the houses still retain their original joinery, but poor replacement windows and doors are evident. Similarly, some roofing materials have been replaced with concrete tiles or artificial slate rather than their natural equivalents.</p>
Neighbourhood streets: Cambridge Gardens			
 <p>The grain is regular on either side of a suburban street. Variety created by the angles of the buildings at the road junctions to the north and south.</p>	 <p>The plots are regular for the most part with semi-detached cottages set back from the road. Wedge-shaped plots turn the corners and create interest.</p>	 <p>The rendered walls and pantile roofs form an interlude in a part of St Neots that is mainly composed of slightly earlier buildings of buff brick and slate. The comparatively generous plots and the cottage style architecture give this development a rural feel.</p>	<p>Cambridge Gardens is a charming (originally) council house development erected before the Second World War and much appreciated by Pevsner. As with other council housing of the period in Huntingdonshire, the style of Cambridge Gardens was heavily influenced by the Arts and Craft Movement. However, this particular variation appears to be unique in the District and deserves to be better appreciated. Although largely unspoiled, there is some degradation caused by inappropriate replacement doors and windows as well as boundary treatment. It is also a shame that the original orange pantiles are now a rarity. Owners might be encouraged to restore wooden fencing, replant privet hedges and resist the temptation to use front gardens for car parking.</p>

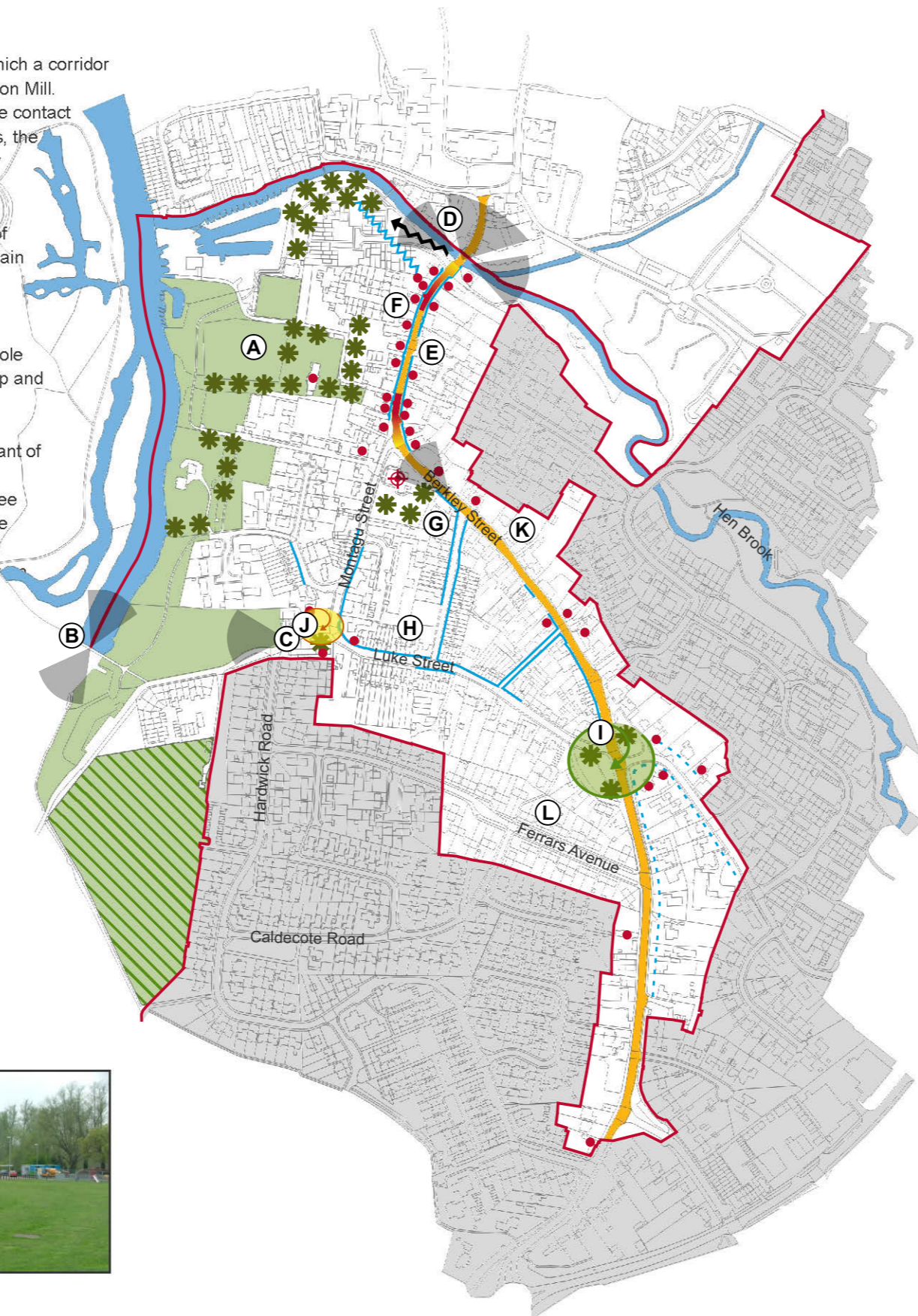
2a. Eynesbury Character Analysis

Eynesbury Riverside (neighbourhood 2a)

The Great Ouse forms the western boundary of Eynesbury along which a corridor of open land extends from Hen Brook to a point opposite Eaton Socon Mill. Formally, the open ground south of Hen Brook (where it is in intimate contact with the ancient settlement edge) contained traditional village closes, the boundaries of which can still be traced on the ground [A]. Until fairly recently this was an area of extensive allotment gardens, but only a remnant remains of this particular land use to the west of Hardwick Road. Allotments were an important part of the domestic economy of places like Eynesbury throughout much of the 20th century and remain historically significant.

The riverside is the only point at which the limit of the historic built environment is adjacent to the open land that once encircled the whole settlement. The footbridge crossing the river here gives fine views up and down the flood plain [B].

To the south the landscape opens up to meadowland, the last remnant of the traditional land use pattern that survived from medieval times to enclosure in the early 19th century [C]. The area covered by the three Common Fields that complemented the meadow (Sand Field, Middle Field and Brook Field) has largely been built over since the 1950's. This development now isolates the built environment of the village from the rural landscape that fostered it.



A. Riverside south of Hen Brook



B. Eynesbury Riverside from footbridge



C. Riverside Meadows



D. View from Hen Brook Bridge



E. St Mary's Street, towards Eynesbury Church



G. Eynesbury Parish Church and Graveyard



F. St Mary's Street



H. Luke Street



I. Eynesbury Green



J. Junction of Montague Street and Hardwick Road



Core Settlement Area (neighbourhood 2b)

The most memorable part of Eynesbury is St. Mary’s Church and its approaches along St. Mary’s Street. The latter is entered from St. Neots via a bridge over the Hen Brook, from where there are interesting views along the brook and north to St. Neots Parish Church [D]. A path runs on the Eynesbury side of the brook west towards the Ouse with views over towards St. Neots core settlement. The insertion of Navigation Wharf, an access road to some new development at this point, has created a “space leak” where the enclosed nature of St. Mary’s Street effectively breaks down. High house platforms, built as a flood protection measure, are unnecessarily intrusive.

From the Hen Brook Bridge the St. Mary’s Street gently curves right as it runs south and narrows before eventually opening up again as it approaches the Parish Church [E]. This street is densely grained with a variety of facades from the 17th century onwards (unfortunately, those from the later 20th century are not as successful in maintaining the ambience of the rest of the street and the entrance to Berkeley Court creates another space leak). St. Mary’s Street is characterised by back of pavement development [F].

St. Mary’s Church is a local landmark set in a pretty churchyard with mature trees. It stands at the northern point of a right angle triangle of streets (Berkeley Street, Montagu Street and Luke Street) that may originally have enclosed a large green [G]. Whilst this area has been technically enclosed at least since the 18th century it was not fully built upon until after the 1950’s. Two lanes that cross the area have opened up the backlands for building.

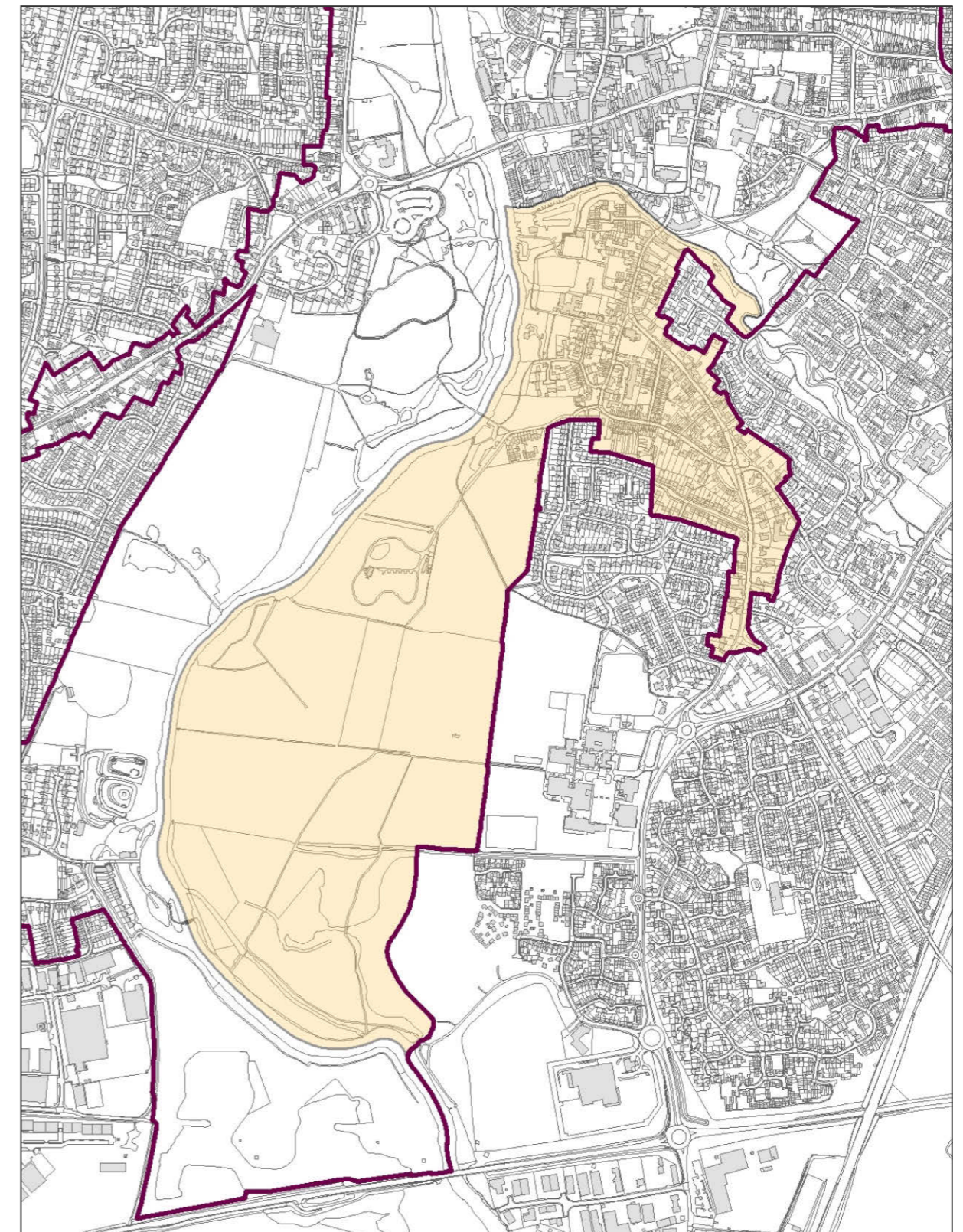
As might be expected from its history this area contains a wide variety of buildings from different ages and of varying status. Many of the smaller and later cottages and terraces are on small plots and are built near or on the pavements [H]. Higher status buildings (particularly those along Berkley Street) have more spacious plots.

The existing remnant of Eynesbury Green lies at the southern tip of the triangle and retains a suitable feeling of enclosure with some mature trees (although it would benefit from enhancement to lessen the impact of road traffic upon it) [I]. At the junction of Montagu Street, Hardwick Road and Washbank Road there is a square that forms an interesting urban enclosed space that gives out onto views (and access) to the riverside to the west [J].

Berkeley Street is one of the principal streets through the historic settlement. Many of the older houses in Eynesbury are situated along it, particularly on its eastern side. At one time some of these would have been the homes of the more substantial farmers and tradesmen. Berkeley Street is characterised by larger plots and retains an open feel to the street frontage [K].

Ferrars Avenue, a small estate of early council housing is situated in the conservation area lying south of the village centre. Built before the 1950’s it was the first phase of a more extensive estate. The street is well proportioned and interestingly laid out with semi-detached houses built with local brick [L].

Eynesbury Locality Map



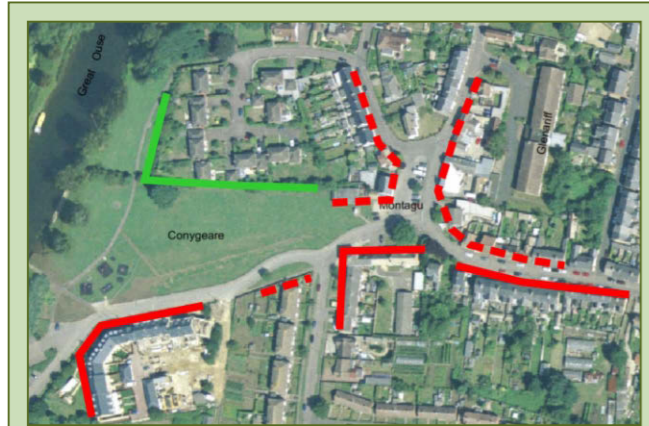
K. Berkeley Street



L. Ferrars Avenue

2b. Eynesbury Spatial Analysis

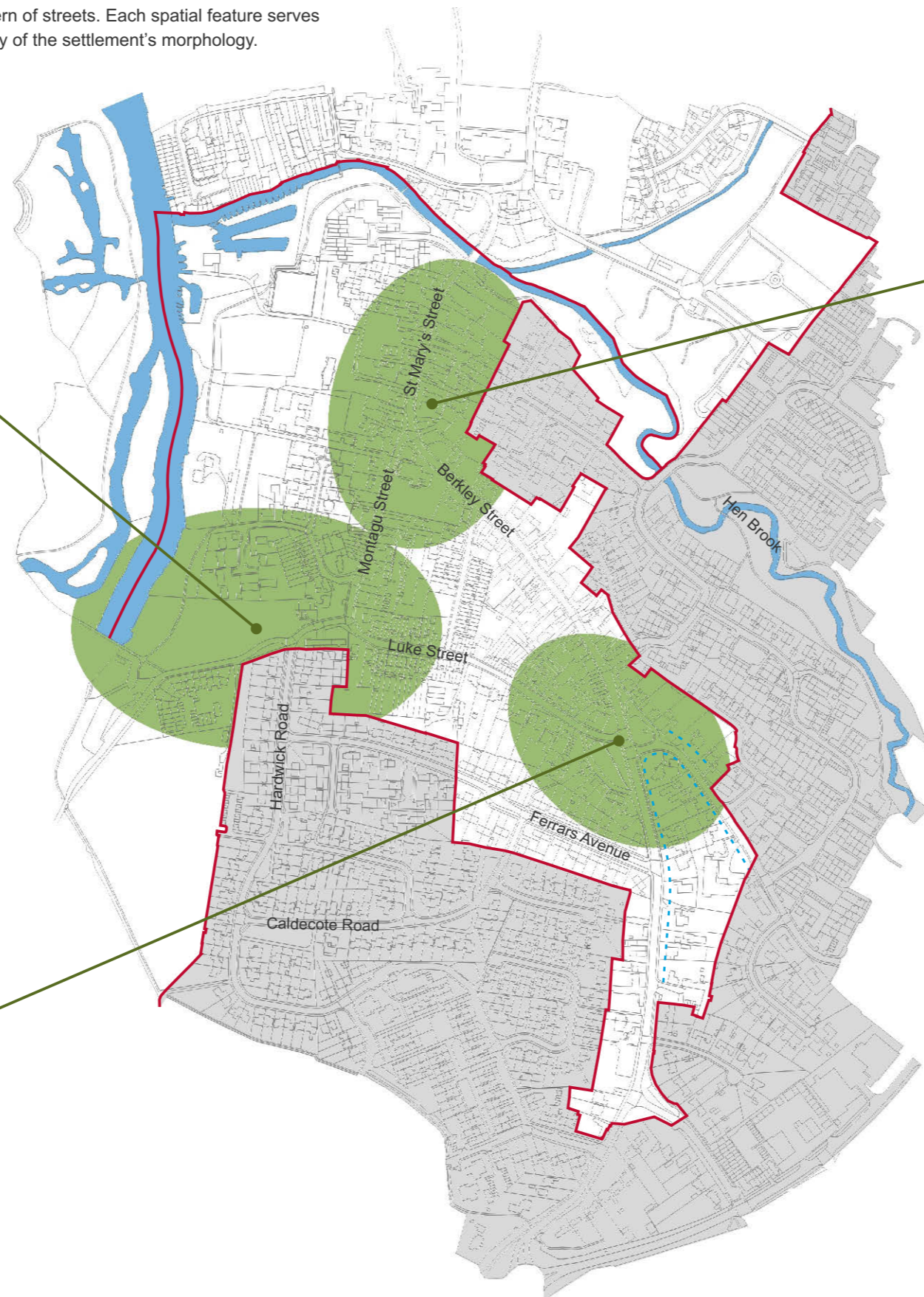
Spatial features at each of its angles reinforce Eynesbury's triangular pattern of streets. Each spatial feature serves a different, but appropriate function that reinforces the over all homogeneity of the settlement's morphology.



The Western Portal. The western portal provides the best access to the riverside from the original village envelope. This is a significant, if modest, spatial feature and despite its internal irregularity maintains a quiet dignity.



Eynesbury Green. Eynesbury Green is an irregular open space that is situated at the southern apex of the Eynesbury triangle. It is bisected by Berkeley Street, which breaks down the homogeneity of the green. Otherwise it is a welcome space within an over urbanised context.



The Parish Church and St Mary's Street. This narrow and somewhat sinuous street opens up at its southern end to reveal the church within a churchyard containing mature trees. This visually re-enforces Eynesbury's origins as a rural settlement.

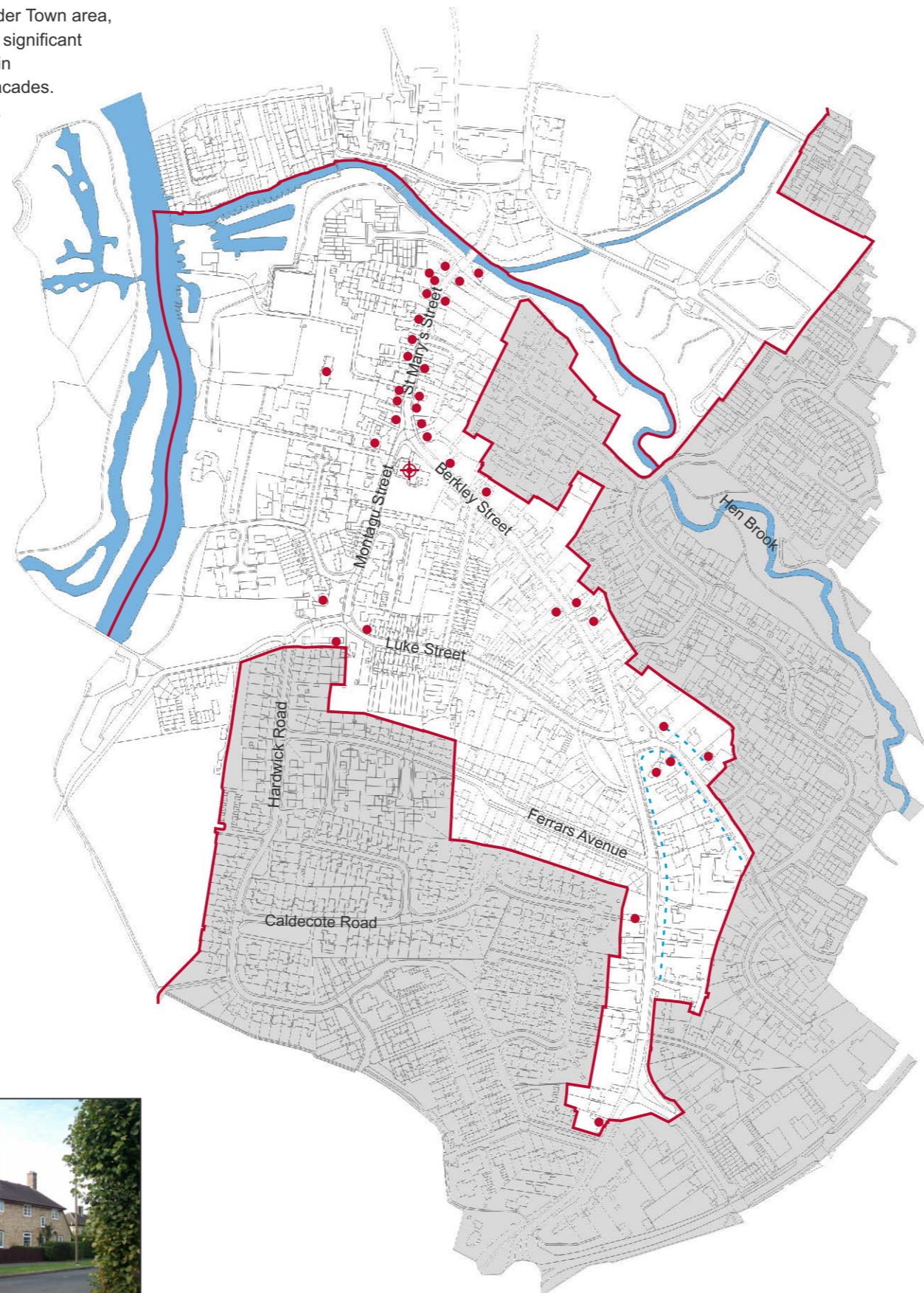
Key	
	Continuous built form
	Broken built form
	Green edges
	Watercourses
	Trees enclosing space
	Landmark buildings



2c. Eynesbury Building Type Analysis

Eynesbury, as with the other older settled areas within the broader Town area, contains a relatively high number of building types. There are some significant medieval timber framed buildings [T1A] such as The Chequers in St. Mary's Street, but others may be hidden behind later brick facades. Eynesbury also has a number of fine vernacular cottages [T1B]. Other building types include T2; T3; T4; T6; T7A (Ferrars Avenue); T8 (a few examples are to be found within the curtilages of houses previously used by the farming community); T10A (the Parish Church).

N.B. For a definition of buildings types see **Annex A**.



St Neots Conservation Area Character Assessment



2d. Eynesbury Building Details and Materials

Eynesbury has a subdued palette of colours and range of building materials. However, there is a certain richness in style reflecting the age of the settlement. Many of the buildings retain their original detailing and measures should be adopted to help retain these.



Victorian exuberance survives in some buildings where the individuality of the builder is reflected in the choice of style. However, over-painting of detail can produce rather a bazaar effect!



St. Mary's Street. Modest buildings treated soberly with nice original features to many of them act as a foil to the grander house, thus preserving the sense of architectural hierarchy.




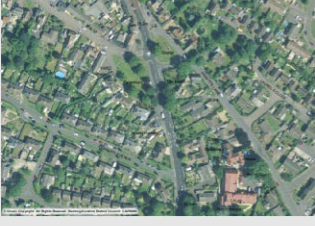










Berkeley Street. Contains some good neo-classical villas with well-executed brick door and window arches. The monumental chimneystack and low profile slate roof add presence and dignity to such buildings.



The vernacular tradition is strong in Eynesbury with many older features reflected in much later developments such as the 'arts and craft' influence in Ferrars Avenue.



Grain	Plot	Visual quality	Summary
Neighbourhood streets: St Mary's Street			
 <p>Tight form of development with buildings grouped along the highway edge. The street is narrow giving a feeling of enclosure.</p>	 <p>Plots relatively long and narrow but with variety in frontage widths. Buildings set at edge of highway.</p>	 <p>Street still retains the visual quality of a village. Its sinuous line, views of the parish church and variations in ridge and eaves height add interest. To the west, views of mature trees behind the houses soften the urban fabric and hint at the river beyond.</p>	<p>St. Mary's Street is typical of a planned medieval development. Its line follows the natural topography, but at the same time it is tightly laid out in long plots with the narrow end onto the road. Buildings tend to be set at the pavement edges and although often attached to their neighbours frequently have passageways through to the grounds behind. Most buildings are two storeys, but there are a few grander houses of three. The variety of ridgelines and eaves heights, minor setbacks between facades, and the gentle curve of the street itself, add interest. Variety of building materials reflecting fashion in building styles over the ages. Brick (sometimes painted), render and timber framing are typical. Roof materials are mostly clay tiles, but some slate. It is to be expected that behind many of the older brick facades there is more timber framing. Original detailing has largely been retained.</p>
Neighbourhood streets: Berkeley Street			
 <p>The grain is loose and dispersed, suggesting a spacious character.</p>	 <p>Plots typically large and irregular. Buildings sit to one side of plot, with their gable ends towards the highway ????</p>	 <p>Berkeley Street retains the visual quality of a typical Huntingdonshire village. Particularly on its eastern side. Its generous plots with buildings placed around yards are reminiscent of their agricultural origins. There is plenty of mature planting and buildings are grander.</p>	<p>Berkeley Street shows signs of more organic growth than St Mary's Street, from which it emerges. Its eastern side was developed first as originally the buildings on this side faced onto the large Green that now lies under Montagu Street, Luke Street and Silver Street. Before the Green was built upon the village would have looked similar to others in the locality, such as Eltisley. Until the 18th century there would have been comparatively few buildings in Berkeley Street, and those that there were would have been farmhouses (and the cottages of agricultural workers) set amongst closes. Infilling in more recent times has not totally obliterated the original morphology of the area. Building materials similar to those found along St. Mary's Street. In order to preserve the looser grain further infilling should be resisted and measures taken to preserve existing original building detail and joinery.</p>
Neighbourhood streets: Montagu Street, Luke Street, Buckley Street and Silver Street			
 <p>Irregular run of streets, tightly grained and frequently narrow.</p>	 <p>Typically, long and very narrow plots packed together. Buildings towards the front of plots, some set back a little.</p>	 <p>There is no great visual unit to this area because of the piecemeal development of what was, originally, an open green. The Parish Church sits in the one remaining piece of open land, the churchyard. Some mature planting helps to soften the area and gives a green feeling in summer.</p>	<p>This area of Eynesbury is historically significant, although its built up nature belies its origins. Originally the Parish Church would have sat at one corner of a large three-sided green. There are a great variety of building types from most of the development stages of the settlement, but especially the late 19th century onwards. In this area, there is a predominance of buff brick and slate. Typical late 19th and early 20th century workers cottages in Luke Street, but more varied styles in Montagu Street. The challenge for the management of future development in this neighbourhood is attend to the very varied nature of the build environment, whilst preserving and enhancing what remains of its open spaces.</p>
Neighbourhood streets: Ferrars Avenue			
 <p>Spaciously laid out semi-detached houses set within regular plots. Slight variation of building alignment gives interest without destroying the regularity of the development.</p>	 <p>Plots are regular rectangles with wide frontage/narrow span plan-forms. Buildings regular and set back with prominent gardens.</p>	 <p>This is the first of the major public housing schemes in Eynesbury, and presents a well-organised and spacious visual quality in the style of the Garden City movement. Its description as an avenue is apt and the uniformity of the building materials, with some asymmetry in the designs, retains visual interest.</p>	<p>The earliest phase of Ferrars Avenue (the eastern end) is decidedly the best part. Although markedly different from the older parts of the village, it marks an important stage in the social and economic development of the historic core settlement. The houses are a variation of the traditional Huntingdonshire style of council housing. The building materials are consistent throughout, buff brick with slate roofs. The design accentuates the chimneys and the fenestration is generous. All the houses are semi-detached and in proportion to their plots. Privet hedges, planted front gardens and avenue trees are a feature, and should be preserved. The coherent building line should also be protected against add-ons such as porches and other developments that may detract from the overall design of the street scene.</p>

3a. Eaton Socon Character Analysis

Eaton Socon Riverside (neighbourhood 3a)

South of Duloe Brook was an area of meadow or pasture associated with the manor of Eaton Socon, which unlike the land north of the brook has probably never been arable. Between the village and the river the remains of the Beaucham castle is situated, now a series of low mounds and a scheduled site **[A]**. More might be made of this interesting monument in terms of its association with the village.

Nearby is Eaton Mill, a local landmark **[B]**. This area is characterised by a complexity of water channels, islands and mature trees. There is a terrace of modern town houses and apartments near the mill. They are well designed but, regrettably, over-scaled nearest the mill itself. Whilst this development does not detract unduly from the setting of the mill, no further building should be allowed here.

South of the mill is an area of small lakes once the meadows of the hamlet of Wyboston. That part which lies within the Conservation Area is open to public recreation, which should be encouraged.

The Eatons' Historic Route (neighbourhood 3d)

This term describes the route through from Eaton Socon to Eaton Ford and the Ouse Bridge. There are three sections of this route in the Conservation Area:- Eaton Ford and the river crossing itself, the area around the old St. Neots Union Workhouse and the high road through the village of Eaton Socon. The Eaton Socon stretch lies along the Great North Road whilst the other two elements are on the St Neots to Cambridge road that branches off it north of Eaton Socon.

The centre of the village is located around the Parish Church (a local landmark east of the Great North Road), in front of which there is a green that has been somewhat diminished by the insertion of tarmac roads and some later building **[C]**. Within living memory it would have appeared more open and could be improved with sensitive enhancement measures. The Parish Church was partially rebuilt following a fire earlier in the 20th century and stands central to its graveyard and back from the green **[D]**.



A. Eaton Socon riverbank towards the Castle



B. Eaton Mill and environs



C. Eaton Socon Green from south



D. Eaton Socon Green from north



I. The Riverside at Eaton Ford



J. The Whitehouse, St Neots Road



3a. Eaton Ford Character Analysis

Eaton Ford Riverside (neighbourhood 3b)

North of Duloe Brook as far as the vicinity of Crosshall the riverside wraps around Eaton Ford to the east, on ground that rises towards Duloe and Crosshall. This land was suitable for arable and before enclosure two of the Common Fields were located here. Ford Field to the south of Eaton Ford and Hill Field to the north. These were two of a group of four Common Fields around Eaton Socon, the other two being Backside Field (west of the village) and Winyard Field (between the latter and Ford Field). These were small relative to, say, the three common fields at Eynesbury.

The Riverside Park itself, however, is on the lower ground and liable to inundation. The river at this point is braided with a number of small islands. This was the area over which the causeway ran from the western end of the 17th century stone bridge to the higher ground on which Eaton Ford hamlet was settled [I]. An arrangement that is still extant at St. Ives.

Further north along the St. Neots Road just after it branches off from the Great North Road on the left hand side is the old St Neots Union Workhouse (a local landmark now known as the Whitehouse) [J]. It would, when built, have been in open country and is a reminder that even before local government reorganisation (in the later 20th century) that placed the Eatons within the town of St. Neots these settlements were being drawn into its ambit.

Crosshall (neighbourhood 3c)

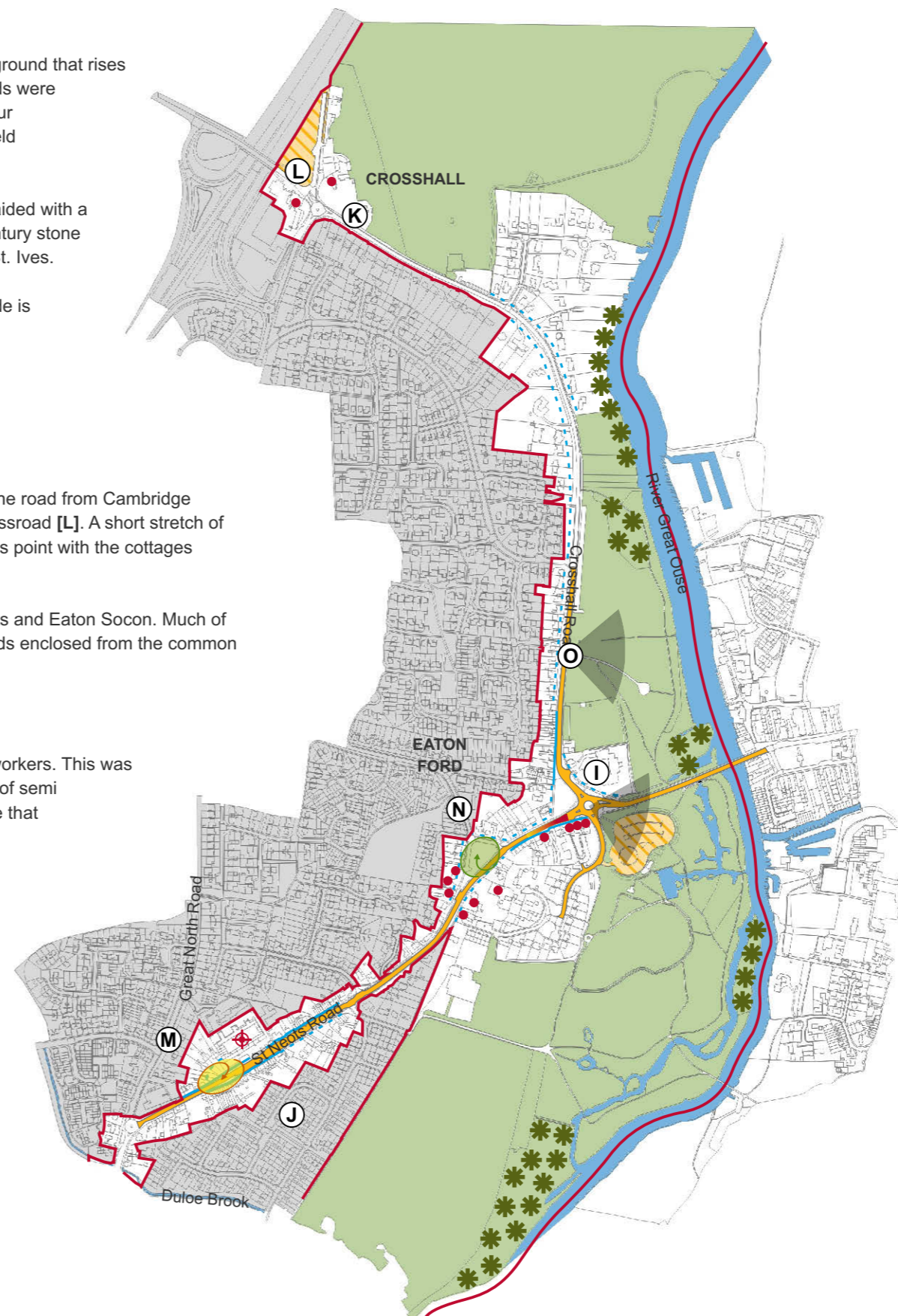
Crosshall Manor (now a listed building) was built at an important crossroad where the Great North Road met the road from Cambridge (via St. Neots) to Northampton [K]. The "Eaton Oak" Inn (another listed building) is also to be found at this crossroad [L]. A short stretch of the Great North Road's original alignment (prior to the construction of the dual carriageway) can be seen at this point with the cottages that ensured its survival. This area would benefit from an enhancement plan.

This is part of the historic road network based on the river crossing that underpinned the prosperity of St. Neots and Eaton Socon. Much of the Great North Road south of Crosshall now lies amongst late 20th century housing estates built over the fields enclosed from the common fields two hundred years ago and this lies outside the Conservation Area.

The Eatons' Historic Route (neighbourhood 3d)

A Methodist Chapel was built near the Workhouse demonstrating its appeal to both the poor and agricultural workers. This was not historically a fashionable area as the level of traditional terrace housing suggests. A more recent grouping of semi detached houses built back from the road to the west of the Whitehouse have created an enclosed urban space that complements the area and which, with enhancement, could be quite charming [M].

Eaton Ford is an ancient hamlet with houses scattered around a small green that creates an enclosed urban green space [N]. Some interesting timber-framed buildings have survived, particularly on the south side. Leaving the hamlet going east the building line curves away to the north (towards Crosshall) and there are extensive views over the Ouse valley [O]. Approaching from the bridge going west the effect of the building line is to create a pinch-point that draws the traveller into the hamlet.



M. Urban Space near the Whitehouse



N. Eaton Ford Green



K. Crosshall



L. The Eaton Oak, Crosshall



O. Views of the Ouse Valley



3a. The Eatons Character Analysis

To the south of the church and running east to the Mill is School Lane (named after the village school, now demolished). However, the lane itself predates the school and near the river joins with another historic lane that leaves the high road further south, now known as Ackerman Street. The space between these two lanes is an irregular oval that may originally have been part of the green (not dissimilar to the rather more extensive one at Eynesbury). However, it was being enclosed piecemeal by the second half of the 18th century, and probably earlier; about a third of it remains open today [E]. Along School Lane is the village lock-up, known as The Cage [F].

The Great North Road forms the main village street. As with so many villages in the vicinity the houses tend to be strung out along the road, most (originally) set within discreet curtilages running back from the road. Dwellings within the village centre were more likely to be packed closer together and the building of later terraces has enhanced this effect. On either side of the approaches to the village centre farmhouses with their outbuildings stood within rectangular closes, narrow side onto the road – often with un-built closes in between. Over time these frontages have been built up, but the open effect is still discernable. Further infilling should be resisted within the Conservation Area in order to preserve this characteristic of the village.

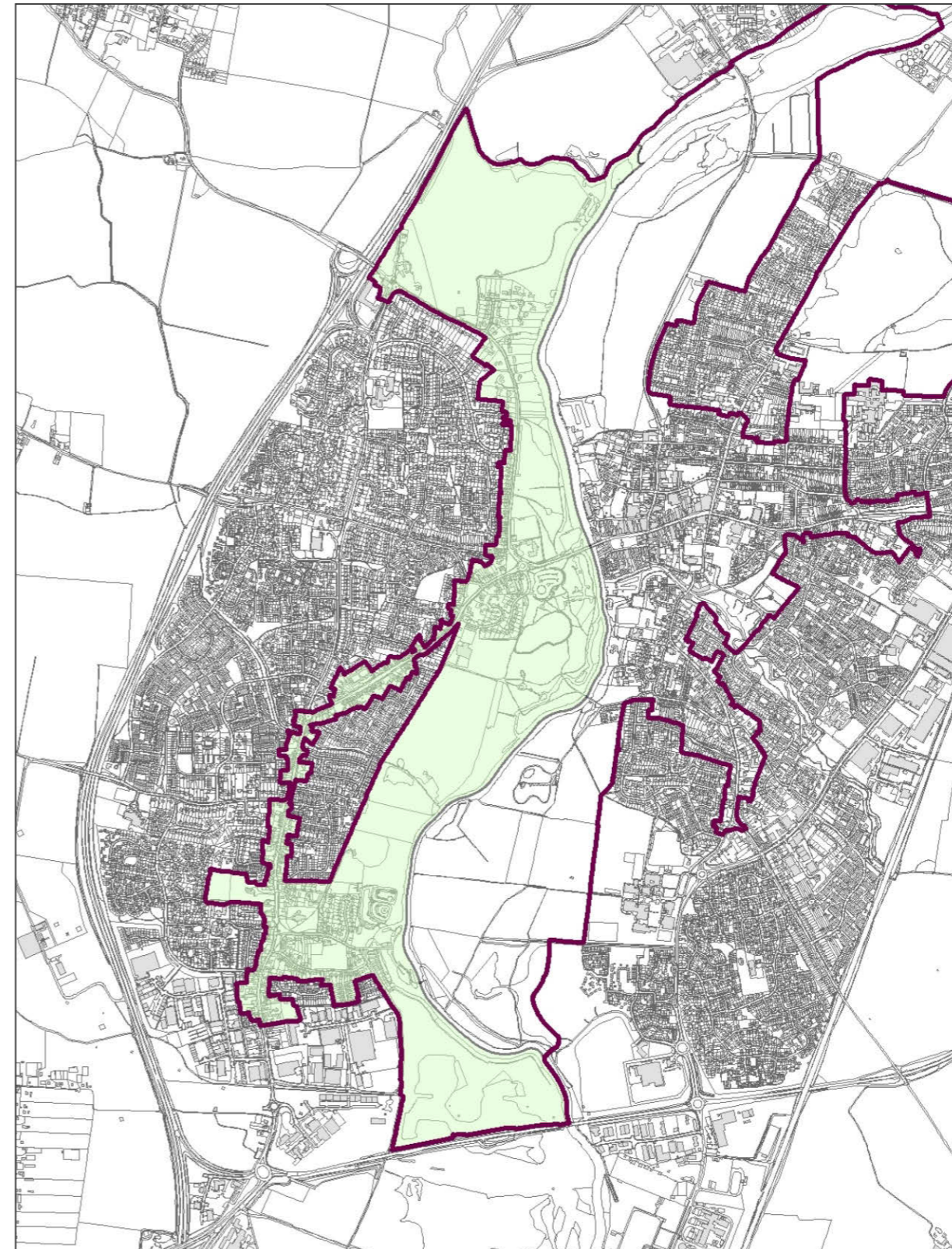
The old Vicarage, opposite Peppercorns Lane (another ancient lane leading to the riparian pastureland) lies within a large curtilage and can be clearly glimpsed from the highway [G]. It remains the only curtilage to retain its original dimensions back from the main road and should be respected as open land for the future. It was also once partly the vicarial glebe, possibly the land settled on the vicar as part of the agreement over the commutation of the tithes in 1795.

Many of the older dwellings within Eaton Socon have timber framing, although brick became the dominant building material from at least the 18th century. Regrettably much of the modern infill uses non-traditional bricks and their orientation is too frequently intrusive with access roads that cause space leaks within the existing pattern of frontages. Opportunities for improving these weak points should be encouraged.

Eaton Socon provided services during the heyday of the horse-drawn coaches along the Great North Road and there are a number of inns through the village that hark back to this time. Any of the surviving yards around 18th and early 19th century buildings may have been used to provide services at this period and their form should be preserved [H].

The conservation area includes the first council house estate built in Eaton Socon in the first half of the 20th century (off Ackerman Street). This was an important landmark locally in social housing reflecting the economic and social situation of the time. It is the good local vernacular style of the time.

The Eatons Locality Map



E. View over playing fields towards church



F. The Cage, Eaton Socon



G. Old Vicarage, Eaton Socon



H. One of Eaton's Old Coaching Inns

3b. The Eatons Spatial Analysis

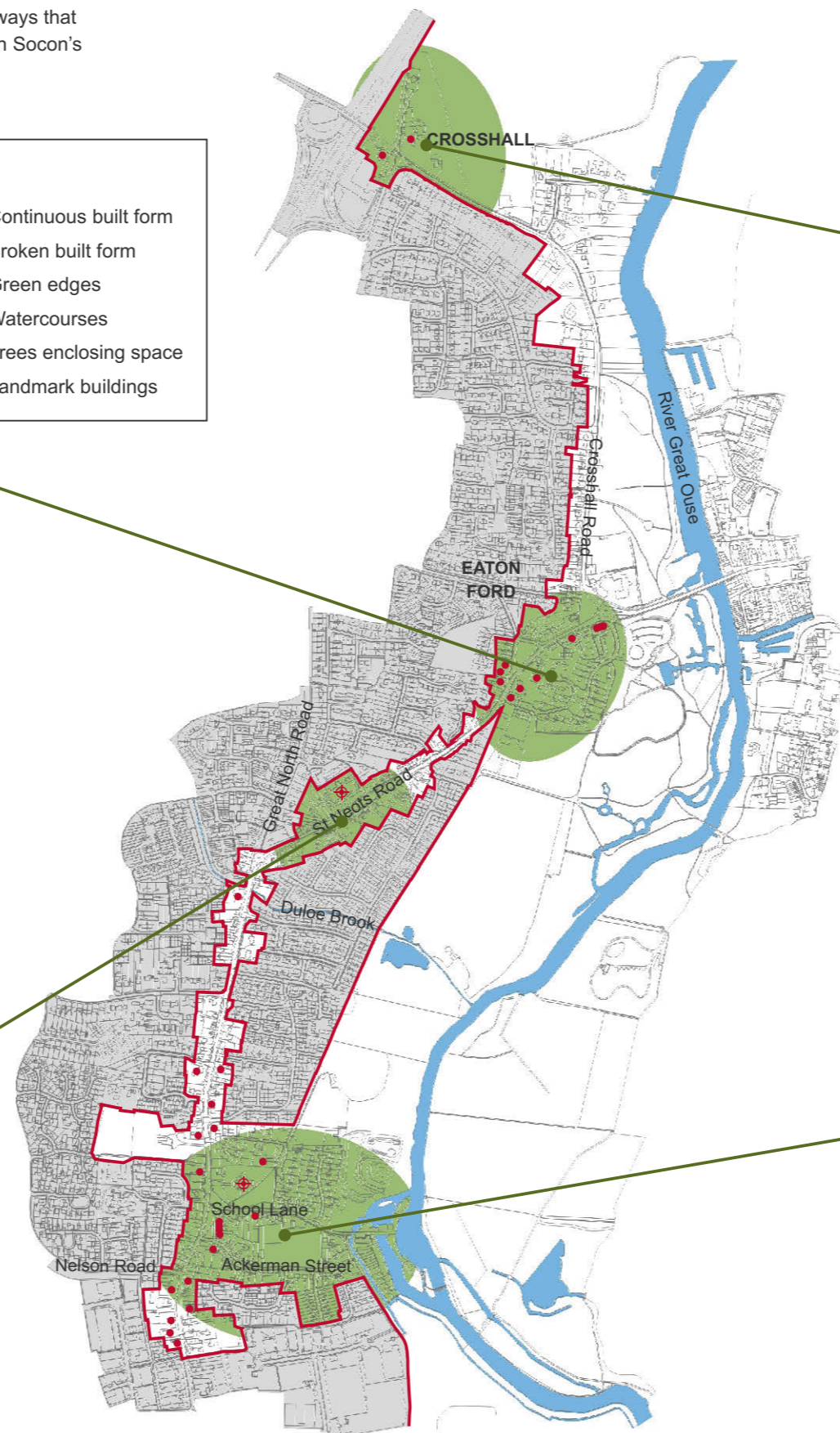
This part of the town has a series of spatial features typically lying along the Highways that traverse the west bank of the Ouse. The most complex of these spaces is at Eaton Socon's historic centre.



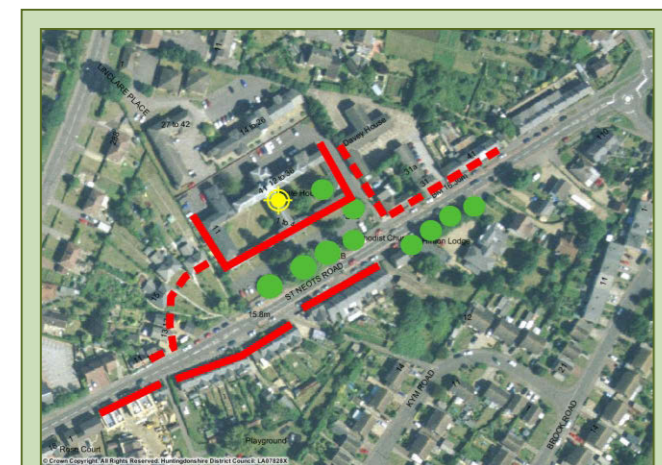
Eaton Ford. Eaton Ford Green forms the centre of this hamlet. Recent development has emphasised the enclosure of this space without unduly disturbing its essential character. A secondary and partially enclosed green has been created between the old hamlet and the bridgehead. This has become an important space and would benefit from further enhancement.

Key

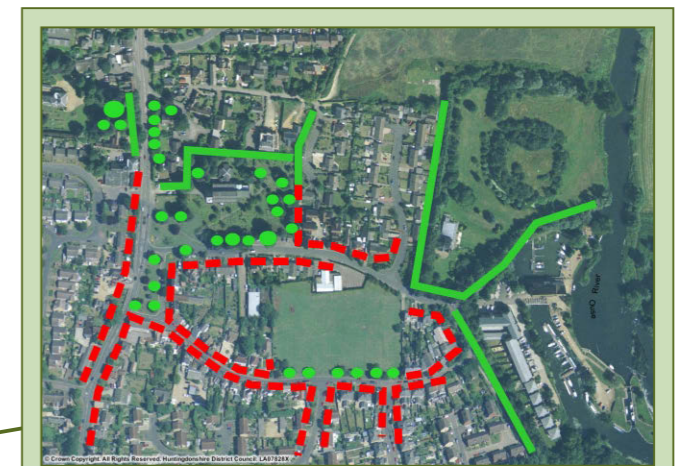
- Continuous built form
- - - Broken built form
- - - Green edges
- Watercourses
- Trees enclosing space
- Landmark buildings



Crosshall. Crosshall is an historically significant spatial element formed where the original course of the Great North Road crossed the route from St. Neots to Northampton. Regrettably, its form has become eroded over time. Its potential will not be fulfilled without a well-planned enhancement scheme.



The Union Workhouse, St Neots Road. The Union Workhouse is a regular building constructed in a formal style, situated north of the St. Neots Road and set back from it. It would have been very visible when surrounded by fields and perhaps more of a local landmark than it appears today. The alignment of the post 1950's semis to the left of the workhouse complex emphasises the spatial quality of the area.



Eaton Socon. The archaeological evidence for the Late Saxon settlement is mainly beneath the site of the Anarchy Castle near the river. The morphology of the village as it is today suggests that it may have been a planned re-settlement; possibly post Conquest. The western edge of the settlement follows an alignment broadly along the course of the Great North Road, with School Lane forming a spur connecting the village centre to the riverside at the Mill. The church was placed north of what is now School Lane with the village Green predominantly lying to the south.



3c. The Eatons Building Type Analysis

This locality includes all of the Conservation Area west of the River Ouse. This was a predominantly agricultural area and the building types reflect this. Different parts of the Conservation Area are characterised by different mixes of a fairly limited range of types.

Eaton Socon Riverside (neighbourhood 3a)

Buildings in this neighbourhood are restricted to the eastern side of the village nearest the river. The housing mix here includes T7A (Ackerman Gardens); some modern houses including riverside town house style dwellings (unclassified); and T9A (Eaton Socon Mill).

Eaton Ford Riverside (neighbourhood 3b)

The few buildings actually within the Eaton Ford riverside area are restricted to Crosshall road. These include types T7B and other modern examples.

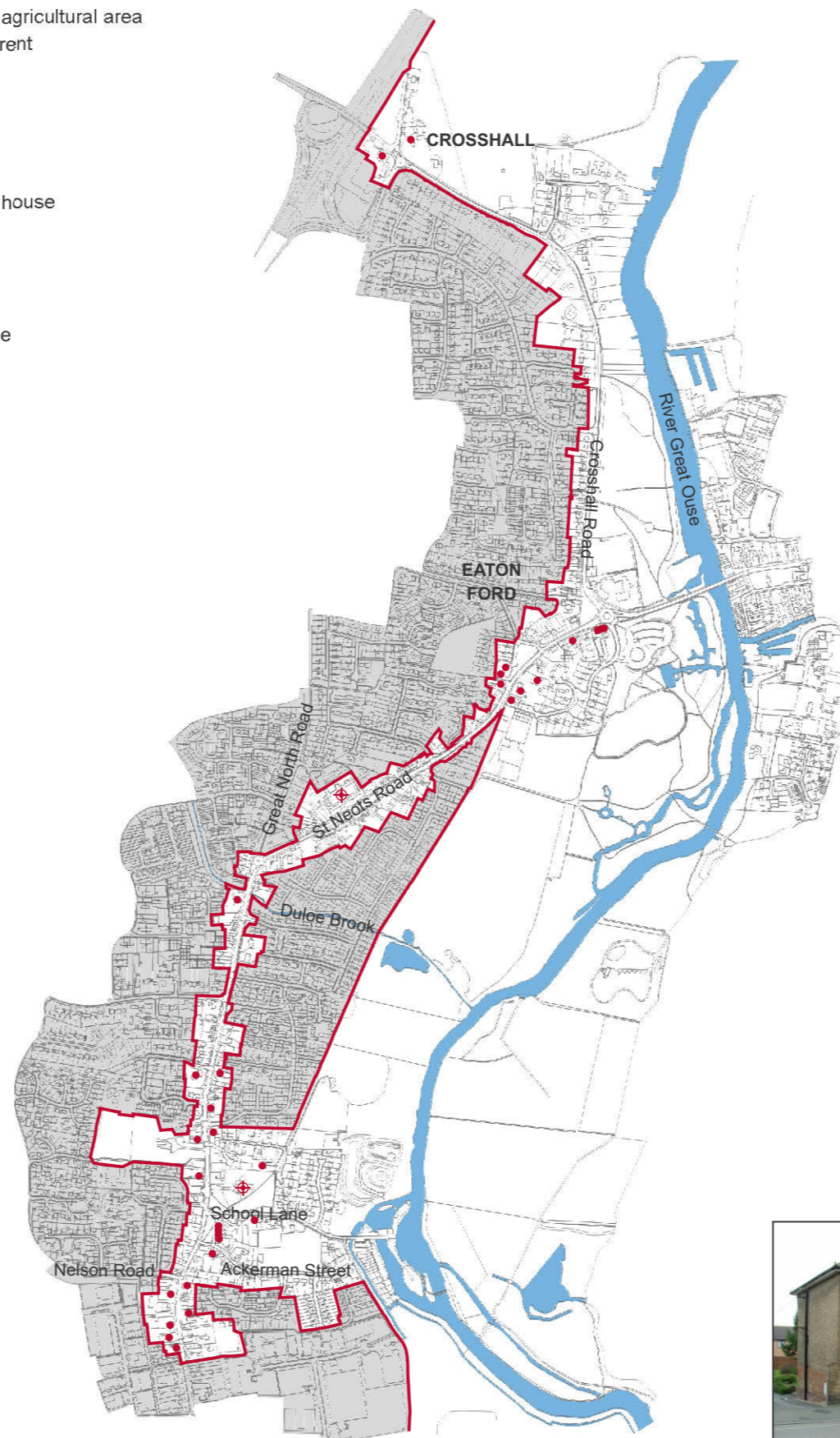
Crosshall (neighbourhood 3c)

There are few buildings in this part of the Conservation Area. They include building types T1A (Crosshall Manor); T3; T7B and other modern examples (mainly examples of large detached and semi-detached villas).

The Eatons Historic Route (neighbourhood 3d)

This neighbourhood runs north from Eaton Socon village centre to Eaton Ford. With the exception of those buildings constructed as places of worship most buildings are residential with a number used for business and commerce. The building types are as extensive as in the other historic areas of the town, but there is also a high degree of mixing of types. Along the Eatons Historic Route building types include T1A; T1B; T2; T3; T4; T6 (notably the Vicarage at Eaton Socon); T7B (occasional); T8 (as at Eynesbury some examples of agricultural buildings survive within, now, domestic curtilages); T10A (Eaton Socon Parish Church); T10B; Additionally, there is the Union Workhouse.

N.B. For a definition of buildings types see **Annex A**.



3d. The Eatons Building Details and Materials

There is a wide range of architectural influences in the Eatons. Generally these are pretty well mixed throughout the locality with, unsurprisingly, the greater range within the older settlement areas. However, buff brick and painted render are the predominant external materials with either clay tile or later slate roofing.



Vernacular cottages are found throughout the locality. Frequently rendered many will have internal timber frames. Clay-tiled roofs are typically punctuated with small dormer windows of varying design.











Classically inspired villas are to be found on the periphery of the older settlements on this side of the river. Deep eaves under low-pitched slate roofs are a feature of later 19th century examples, whilst late 18th and early 19th century grander houses sport neo-classical parapets. A feature of these buildings is the elegant and well-proportioned doorways and porches.



Eaton Socon Mill is an example of local industrial architecture now put to another purpose. Whilst external facades can be preserved intact in most cases, the challenge is often about preserving the format of such a buildings internal space.

3e. The Eatons Design Code

Grain	Plot	Visual quality	Summary
Neighbourhood streets: St Neots Road, Eaton Ford			
 <p>Open green framed by houses some of which are on regular plots. Feeling of openness and hint of a rural atmosphere engendered by mature trees.</p>	 <p>Plots around the green vary considerably in size and shape. Older plots larger and more irregular.</p>	 <p>The central green provides visual harmony, despite the distraction of the St Neots Road. The tighter-packed development to the north gives a harder edge to the neighbourhood and contrasts with the more open (and older) development to the south. The general openness of the grain together with mature planting makes this an attractive area.</p>	<p>Eaton Ford is a hamlet development around a typically triangular green. Originally it would have been built-up on its south site (principally), and this is where the majority of older houses sit. Its form, therefore is similar to Eynesbury's, but on a much smaller scale. The newer building plots are more regular than the older, which gives the green a greater sense of enclosure on its north-western side. Materials include render, brick (red and buff), timber framing, slate, clay tile and thatch. Mature planting softens the visual quality and still suggests the rural origins of the place. There is little scope for future development or infilling and any that is permitted will need to be small scale and pay particular attention to building detail, materials and scale of surrounding buildings. Street signage and furniture, as well as paving materials should be enhanced.</p>
Neighbourhood streets: St Neots Road at the White House			
 <p>The street is narrow but the feeling of enclosure provided by the edge of highway terraces is broken by the White House and more open development to the north west.</p>	 <p>Plots principally narrow with small scale housing along the street frontage. The White House and neighbouring grounds contrast with this pattern and create openness in the street.</p>	 <p>The striking visual contrast between the White House and the smaller dwellings around it is somewhat diminished by the poor state of the street furniture and surface treatment. Attention to these elements would greatly enhance its visual quality.</p>	<p>The old Union Workhouse, now known as the Whitehouse, originally stood in open fields before being joined to Eaton Ford to the east and Eaton Socon to the south by ribbon development with buildings of various dates. This neighbourhood is typified by, on the one hand, the spacious layout of the Whitehouse and its curtilage and, on the other, by the enclosed nature of the St. Neots Road. Building materials are predominantly buff brick and slate, although there is some use of red brick as well. The contrast in scale between the Whitehouse and surrounding terraced housing is a characteristic of the neighbourhood and should be reflected in any future development. Substantial improvements to the treatment of street furniture, signage and layout at this point would be beneficial.</p>
Neighbourhood streets: Mill and Environs			
 <p>Very open with waterways very prominent. Enclosure created by mature tree cover.</p>	 <p>Plots relate to waterways. Large and spacious feel to the plot structure, despite the regularity of the recent riverside development.</p>	 <p>The visual quality of the mill and its environs is good, although it might be improved in presentation. The mill retains an aura of its industrial past that combines well with the locks and sluices of the waterway.</p>	<p>Eaton Socon Mill is set within one of the best spatial settings in the town. The mature planting, braided watercourses, riparian views, and building of suitable scale combine to produce an exciting landscape. The materials of the new housing harmonise well with the mill building itself. Buff brick, slate, and the use of other natural materials such as wood are complimented by some imaginative use of glass. Ideally little further development should be allowed in this neighbourhood and nothing further of any great scale. Some enhancement of the natural environment by way of habitat management would be beneficial. Enhancement of quayside furniture and pavement materials should be part of any future development.</p>
Neighbourhood streets: Eaton Socon Green, School Lane, Ackerman Street			
 <p>Complex grain around old village green. Preserves a rural character.</p>	 <p>Plot size and arrangement typical of historic core settlement around village green.</p>	 <p>Eaton Socon village still retains its historic elements typified by its large green (only partially built on), the central position of the parish church, and the grain of the village houses and attendant outbuildings.</p>	<p>Eaton Socon village centre preserves the elements of its origins as an ancient agricultural settlement and its later dependence on the Great North Road. It is a shame, therefore, that its landscape setting has been so completely lost except on the riverside. As with the other older settlement sites within the district Eaton Socon enjoys a variety of building types and materials. It is also typified by buildings of suitable scale to their place in the village hierarchy. Such considerations should continue to inform future development decisions, although it is unlikely that much further development can be justified. In particular, further infilling should be resisted if the traditional grain of the historic settlement is to be preserved. The major properties are listed, but attention should be paid to taking measures to preserve the traditional building details of other buildings.</p>

- 4.1 National guidance on the constitution of conservation areas emphasises the important role that they can play in the enhancement of our historic built environment and landscape. St. Neots and District's urban environment would benefit where future development is sensitive to the particular requirements of the historic components within the town.
- 4.2 Small-scale enhancement within the different localities and neighbourhoods involving elements such as street improvements are discussed above. However, it is worth re-stating the need for improvement to paving, street furniture and signage along most of the principal highways; greater attention to local materials and form as well as the decluttering of signage is needed (although it is recognised that much has already been done in such areas as the Market Square). Many shop fronts have lost much of their local character over the years and this trend could be reversed with imagination and effort. Similarly, the issue of parking ought to be addressed, balancing the needs of traders and their customers with environmental improvements.
- 4.3 It is intended to produce further guidance for those areas of St. Neots identified as suitable for enhancement and development in a complimentary document entitled the St. Neots and District Area Management Plan.

This further document will address the following issues: -

Urban Design Frameworks. These are major sites in sensitive areas, usually involving complex development issues and often including land in multiple occupancy. These sites require development strategies if they are to reach their full potential. Failure in these areas would have a seriously negative impact on St. Neots historic environment.

Development Briefs. These look at sites that may become the subject of future applications for residential development. It is anticipated that plans for these sites would conform to the design code set out in this document.

Negative or Neutral Areas. Where negative or neutral areas are identified the judgement is made purely in terms of the character of the conservation area. Whilst in some cases such sites may be suffering from neglect as well, in many cases the buildings associated with these sites will be structurally sound or recently built.

Enhancement Areas. Some areas that retain a significant degree of their historic fabric and form have, none the less, suffered from an unnecessary amount of poor development decisions. These areas require a concerted effort if they are to be brought back to their full potential. In these cases owners and residents should be consulted with a view to formulating policies to effect positive change.

Buildings at Risk. A strategy for the maintenance and repair of important listed buildings in the town will be taken forward.

T1A Medieval timber framed house

Medieval timber framed houses, frequently dating from the mid to late 16th Century. The type is often rendered, or faced in brickwork, and re-fenestrated in later periods, disguising its medieval origins. A number of such structures survive in the St. Neots District.

Key Characteristics:

- Oak framing (often reused) infilled with wattle and daub and covered with lime plaster/render
- Two storeys, some with later dormer windows added to create attic rooms
- Picturesque roofs; with steep pitches, numerous gables and large, sometimes ornate, red brick chimneystacks. Roof coverings depend on location, but the predominant types include plain gault-clay tiles and thatch
- Overhanging eaves
- Frequently built with L and H plan forms, with additive ranges of outbuildings
- Jettying at ground and first floors, with bay-windows to some grander examples
- Originally, windows (mullioned, with leaded lights) were set within the framing, but these were generally replaced by timber sliding sashes or casements in later periods
- Medium to low density housing, depending on plot size
- Varied form and scale, but usually detached, built within settlement boundaries. Commonly associated with burgage plots, and frequently set at back of pavement creating a well defined street pattern

T1b Vernacular cottages

Natural materials made from local geological deposits (for example, gault clays and limestone) together with reeds and straw from the nearby Fens and local farms, has generated the palette of traditional building materials for vernacular buildings. This, together with building techniques developed by the local population over many centuries, has created simple and charming vernacular cottages typically dating from the late 16th to 18th centuries.

Key Characteristics:

- Long, low double-fronted single, 1.5 or 2 storey cottages
- Simple flat-fronted building form, generally eaves to the road
- Buff or rosy-buff brick or stone built, depending on location. Rendered and painted timber framing is common throughout the District
- Shallow plan depth with a simple steeply pitched roof and outbuildings

- Clay plain or pantiles, thatch or Collyweston-slate roof coverings, depending on location
- Eaves and gables are generally clipped close to the building, except for the deep overhangs found on thatched roofs
- Originally built with small, horizontally proportioned window openings with casement or horizontally sliding sash windows. Flat or segmental brick lintels
- Dormer windows are a common feature, with pitched, cat slide or eyebrow roofs, depending on material and location
- Panelled or ledged and braced doors, with some later simple timber porches or canopies
- Large brick chimneystacks were positioned first centrally and later at the gable ends
- Within settlements, cottages are generally terraced and set at the back of the pavement, creating well-defined streets and space

Typical Local Variations

Long low houses built of rosy buff and dark buff brickwork. Roofs are typically thatch or Cambridgeshire mix plain tiles, with pantiles frequently found on outbuildings. Others are rendered and painted timber framed cottages sometimes with projecting weatherboards. Cottages are often 1.5 storeys, with many later examples built of a characteristic dark warm-red brick. Cambridgeshire peg-tiles and thatch are common.

T2 18th - Early 20th Century town house

The Town House building type is found throughout the district; its adaptability to a wide range of scales, materials and uses creates the variety, and strong architectural cohesion of the historic centres of the towns and larger villages. This classically inspired style creates well-defined and elegant streets and public spaces.

During the 18th century it became fashionable to 'modernise' earlier vernacular houses, and it is common to find medieval buildings re-elevated behind Town House facades.

Key Characteristics:

- Predominately terraced form, 2 to 3.5 storeys, generally double stacked with central gutter
- Flat fronted and symmetrical, 2-4 bays wide, vertically proportioned facades
- Vertically proportioned window openings, with flat brick or stone lintels, and timber vertical-sliding sash windows
- Roofscape minimised by the use of parapets, shallow and double pitched roofs with the eaves to road. Cambridgeshire peg tiles and slate are the most common roof coverings

- Stone detailing, often painted, including cills, stringcourses, architraves etc.
- Drive-through archways, gaining access to the rear are a common feature, especially in former coaching towns
- 6 and 4 panelled doors, with door-surrounds and glazed fanlights or door canopies
- The terraced form, often built at back of pavement creates a well-defined street frontage of urban character
- High-medium density, depending on the numbers of storeys, bays, and plot width. Generally built with additive ranges of outbuildings
- Originally built as dwellings, some with shops on the ground floor. The majority are now in commercial and office use. Local Variations

The market towns of Huntingdonshire contain Town Houses in their historic centres. St. Neots has some fine examples, which are generally built of buff coloured brickwork with Cambridgeshire peg-tile roofs. However, there are other variations drawn from a pallet soft red, dark or pale buff bricks, gault-clay plain tiles or slate.

T3 18th - Early 20th Century terraced house

The agricultural and industrial revolutions precipitated major growth of towns in the 18 and 19th centuries. Streets of small terraced houses were built on the edges of the historic towns throughout the district. The type is ubiquitous throughout the country. Although influenced by local materials the advent of the railways improved transportation and encouraged the use of non-local materials, especially mass-produced bricks and Welsh slate for roofs. The majority of terraced houses in the district are built at the back of pavement, however there are examples of a larger version of this type with small front gardens, which creates a wider, greener and more relaxed streetscape.

Key Characteristics:

- Small, generally flat fronted houses; bay windows are a feature on larger examples
- Brick built, occasionally with contrasting brick detailing, such as string courses and door and window surrounds
- Vertically proportioned window openings, with flat and segmental brick arches, and stone cills
- Vertical sliding sash windows and timber panelled doors, typically with glazed fanlights over
- Eaves and gables are generally undecorated and generally clipped close to the building
- Chimneystacks are usually positioned on the party wall
- Simple pitched roofs with slate roof covering •High density terraced form, laid out in long straight streets, creating a distinctive urban character

- Parking on street

T4 18th - Early 20th Century villas and semis

This building type is found in the larger villages and towns of the district, where it forms the wealthier 18-early 20th Century fringes to the historic centres. The classic simple architecture of the Georgian period became increasingly eclectic and decorative during the Victorian and Edwardian eras. Although influenced by local building materials, improved transportation brought non-local materials, especially mass-produced bricks and Welsh slate.

The villa form became a popular antithesis to the narrow streets of small working-class erected housing during the Victorian and Edwardian periods. The semi-detached form, creating the illusion of detached villas, is also found in some locations. Ramsey has a fine collection of this building type.

Key Characteristics:

- Medium to large brick-built, detached or semi-detached houses
- Decorative, contrasting brickwork stringcourses, eaves courses, lintels and window reveals
- Canted and square bay windows are a feature, often with stone mullions, now generally painted white
- Decorative stone detailing, including mullions, copings, padstones and plaques
- Vertical window openings with stone cills, flat and segmental brick lintels, and sliding sash windows
- Fairly low-pitched slate covered roofs, some with Italianate hipped roofs. Prominent brick stacks and chimneys
- Large houses are set in spacious grounds. Urban examples have small front gardens that create a greener, more suburban street character

T5 19th Century picturesque

During the Victorian era it became fashionable for wealthy and philanthropic landowners to build housing and other facilities for their tenants, and the local community. The predominant style was based on a Gothicised version of the idealised 'English' cottage, often creating picturesque groups or even whole villages. Generally, materials were of local origin, excepting more decorative elements such as cast iron windows and ornate rainwater goods

Although the type is found in small numbers throughout the district; Abbey Green, Ramsey has several fine examples along its northern side.

Key Characteristics:

- Generally symmetrical but with intricate plan forms, layouts and elevations
- Architectural detailing used for decorative effect, such as buttresses, dentil courses, mouldings, bargeboards and stringcourses
- Picturesque rooflines, with tall decorated chimney stacks, numerous gables, finials and decorated ridge tiles
- Steep roof pitches, with slate or gault clay plain-tile roof coverings. Dormer windows are a feature on cottages
- Strongly mullioned windows often with decorative lattice- work glazing patterns
- Generally set back from the road with small front gardens and low walls to the front boundaries. Alms-houses often with courtyards defined by railings
- Originally built for a range of uses, including schools, estate offices, village halls, almshouses and estate workers cottages. The majority are now in residential use
- Medium to low density depending on use and plot size

T6 18TH - Early 20th Century grand house

The agricultural and industrial revolutions brought new wealth to the district, and many of the wealthy built themselves grand houses, based on the classically inspired stately homes of the aristocracy. Later Victorian examples are influenced by non-classical traditions, and are often less symmetrical displaying stylistic motifs such as gothic arches, round towers, tile hanging and decorative bargeboards. Designed to be seen, and to impress, they are often found on settlement edges throughout the district.

Key Characteristics:

- Large, detached houses with symmetrical, wide-fronted facades, usually on expansive plots
- Georgian examples are wide-fronted, with tall floor to ceiling heights, creating an imposing scale •Vertically proportioned window openings vertically aligned, frequently graduating in height up the façade, with flat-arch stone or 'red-rubber' brick lintels
- Timber vertical-sliding sash windows. Georgian examples generally follow 9, and 16 pane patterns. Victorian sliding sash windows incorporate larger pane sizes
- Roofscape views are minimised through the use of parapets and shallow double-pitched roofs, with the eaves to road. Mansard roofs are found on some examples
- Decorative dentil eaves courses or painted timber cornice eaves detail
- Brick or stone detailing, often painted, including cills, string courses, keystones and quoins
- 6 and 4 panelled doors, with decorative-glazed fanlights or door canopies

- The grand detached forms, usually set back from the road behind railings or walls, create a restful, stately and less urban character
- Frequently set in gardens, with dark evergreen planting, with a backdrop of mature trees Local Variations

The form, detailing and proportions remain fairly constant throughout the district, but materials vary with location. In the St. Neots area variations include warm soft red, dark or pale buff brickwork with gault-clay plain tiles or (later) slate.

T7a Arts & craft influenced housing

The Arts and Craft Movement in the late 19th century, and the Garden Cities of the early 20th century exerted considerable influence on housing until the 1950s. This applied especially to social housing throughout the district, where estates of this housing type are found on the peripheries of the larger towns. 'The Garden City' cottage aesthetic, and the vision of a green and leafy arcadia became increasingly compromised through increased densities and mass production, but the architectural style and geometrical layouts still retain vestiges of the original influences.

The type is found throughout the country, and does not generally show regional variations.

Key Characteristics:

- Geometric, regular layouts with crescents, cul de sacs, and orthogonal junctions
- Semi detached and short terraces of simple flat fronted properties
- Clipped privet hedge front boundaries, often with timber gates, and small front gardens
- Shallow pitched, double-hipped roofs, with slate or plain tiled roof coverings. Simple chimneys on ridgeline
- Originally, multi-paned painted timber casement windows, with soldier-course brick lintels
- Timber front doors with small canopies
- Built of red mass-produced brickwork, frequently roughcast-rendered, and painted cream or pastel colours
- Simple stringcourses of soldier brickwork or render
- Semi detached form, hedges and grass verges to some streets, create a suburban character
- Parking generally on street

T7b 1920s and inter-war suburbia

The poor living conditions of the urban poor in the 19th century, and growing wealth and mobility resulted in the massive growth of suburbia in the 1920 and 30s. A few properties in the district retain influences of the 'Art Deco' of the 1920s. The Arts and Crafts movement also heavily influenced the architectural style of the period, using motifs such as timber framing, tile hanging, leaded lights and stained glass to invoke the idyll of the 'English Cottage'.

This building type is found in small numbers throughout the district. Cambridge Gardens in St. Neots is an unusual local example that displays cottage style proportions with rendered walls and (originally) orange-red pantiles.

key characteristics:

- Simple rectangular semi-detached plan form
- Fairly rectilinear street pattern
- Shallow pitched, double-hipped roofs, with slate or plain tiled roof coverings. Chimneys generally on the ridgeline
- Originally painted metal, and later timber casement windows, some with latticed-lights or stained glass panels
- Mass-produced red brickwork and painted roughcast render
- Decorative gables with timber-framing effect, frequently painted black and white
- Double height bay windows, with rendered or tile-hung panel, are a defining characteristic of the type
- Recessed porches with tiled floors, and glazed front doors, often with stained glass panels
- Semi detached form, hedges and grass verges to some streets, create the archetypal 'suburban' character
- Medium-low density
- Parking off street, generally between properties

T8 Agricultural buildings

This building type is found dispersed throughout the rural areas of the district, but also within some of the older villages, and coalesced into the suburban fringes of the larger settlements. The majority date from the time of the 17-19th Century Enclosure Acts, with some remaining examples from the medieval period.

Late 20th century intensification of farming practices have necessitated large-scaled, industrial type barns, stores and silos which have come to dominate many traditional farmsteads, and often their landscape setting.

Key Characteristics

- Large farmhouses (see vernacular cottages and T6), generally set close to the road, with long, low additive ranges of farm buildings set to the side and rear
- Traditional buildings are small-scale, built of stone, buff and red brick or timber-framed clad with timber weatherboarding, depending on location
- Roofs are generally simple pitched construction, covered with thatch, clay plain or pantiles, and picturesque in appearance
- Modern buildings are large-scale steel-framed single span structures, usually clad in profiled steel sheet, coloured grey Local Variations

Timber weather boarded barns and outbuildings, many of which now have corrugated iron roofs. Later examples use red brick with slate roofs. Another type consists of gault-brickwork barns and outhouses, often laid out in additive ranges, with plain and pantile roof coverings.

T9a Pre-20th Century industrial buildings

St. Neots had a rich heritage of pre 20th century industrial buildings; some were located near waterways, which provided both good transport routes and potentially a means of power. There was a wide range of industrial buildings in the St. Neots District that included corn mills, malt houses, breweries, engineering and iron works, and others. Later buildings were associated with the railways, including warehousing and goods sheds.

Key Characteristics:

- Large scale, visually prominent, discreet and freestanding structures with ancillary buildings Sometimes positioned in the floodplain. Often surrounded by willows
- 3-6 storeys tall. Generally built of buff brick, with slate covered or plain tiled roofs
- Projecting timber weather boarded loading-bays, and pulley houses
- Simple, robust symmetrical elevations with segmental-arched window openings, and loading bays positioned vertically one above another
- Rudimentary neo-classical detailing, such as pilasters and Italianate porticos are a feature on later examples. 'Gothic' detailed examples are also found
- Originally built as mills and warehouses, the majority are now converted for residential use Railway Stations
- The railways first came to the District in 1846, but the surviving station buildings are generally of a later date. Many of the older station buildings were closed and, unfortunately, demolished during the 1960s
- 19th century examples were generally built of red or buff brick, with stone cills, stringcourses and other detailing

- Generally pitched roofs with slate roof coverings. Canopies often glazed with characteristic white painted timber 'gingerbread' fretwork fascias
- Often associated with extensive hard standing, car parking and former coal yards

T10a Parish churches

Ecclesiastical buildings survive from every century and architectural style -unique monuments to the districts' history and culture. Buildings range from Norman and Medieval parish churches to the neo-gothic of the Victorian era and the marvellously idiosyncratic Non-Conformist chapels of the 18-19th centuries. For clarity, key characteristics are listed under two subtypes as below:
 Medieval parish churches to the neo-gothic of the Victorian era and the marvellously idiosyncratic Non-Conformist chapels of the 18-19th centuries. For clarity, key characteristics are listed under two subtypes as below:

Key Characteristics:

- Large scale buildings for Christian worship and former monastic complexes, including surviving gate-houses and hospitium, typically built and altered over a long periods of time
- Set in a churchyard, often with mature trees, especially yews. Generally, parish churches are located centrally in the town or village, while monastic houses were usually situated on the periphery
- Although many are older, the majority appear externally to be Gothic in style, with large, pointed arched and traceried windows, and stained glass. Moulded stringcourses and hood mouldings, buttresses, castellated parapets and other structural and decorative architectural devices evolved and incorporated over time
- Simple, pitched roofs, generally with plain gault-clay roof coverings
- Building materials range from corstone and cobbles to coursed limestone-rubble, and fine ashlar limestone in the north
- Fine, tall spires are a landmark feature of the District. Lancet windows (small pointed window openings) are characteristic of spires in the Northern Wolds. Towers became increasingly common in the 15-16th centuries and were often added to earlier buildings in the 15-16th centuries
- Lych gates are characteristic of church in the area and are defining features of many churchyards. Construction varies from oak with clay tiles to stone structures

T10b Non-conformist chapels

Key Characteristics:

- Simple, generally unadorned facades, consciously avoiding the gothic architectural references of the established church
- Diverse stylistic influences, typically neo-classical

- Simple rectangular plan form, frequently gabled to the road
- Round headed windows, typically cast-iron frames, with clear or pastel-coloured glass
- Generally built of buff brick, with slate roof covering
- Cast iron railings and small paved forecourts are typical Catholic Churches and chapels (legally also "non-conformist") are frequently neo-gothic and ornate.

T11a Victorian and Edwardian civic buildings

This diverse type forms the focal point for community, civic and working life. It includes places of assembly, police and fire stations, shopping complexes, schools, libraries, administrative centres and office blocks.

Key Characteristics:

- Generally, architect designed buildings reflecting status and function
- Medium to large-scale buildings usually discreet in their own plots. Bank buildings often sited at landmark positions within the streetscape to reinforce status
- Variety of architectural styles, including some good examples of Arts and Crafts, and Neo-classical designs
- Diverse good quality materials, including buff and red brick with ashlar masonry and painted render. Dressed stone stringcourses; ornamental pilasters, cornices and copings are common embellishments •Pitched, slate covered roofs are typical
- Frequently single storey but of very grand proportions
- Window styles vary with function; school buildings frequently have large vertically proportioned openings, positioned high in the wall

T11b Late 20th century civic buildings

The late twentieth century has witnessed substantial growth in population, changes in building technology and working practices. Large school complexes, for example, have generated an architectural aesthetic for civic buildings of our era; some examples use contemporary styles and materials, while others reflect aspects of the regional vernacular.

Key Characteristics:

- Large to medium scale buildings, generally with large areas of associated car parking or hard standing
- Varying number of storeys depending on function
- Amenity shrub planting, small ornamental trees and mown grass typify landscaped areas

- Generally avoid the use of decorative architectural devices, although good design generates pleasing visual effects through the manipulation of form, function and materials
- Mass produced buff and red brick are the most common facing materials, with large areas of glazing also a feature
- Other twentieth century materials found in civic buildings include metal trims and copings, cedar boarding, glulam beams, coloured powder-coated metal window frames and large areas of toughened glass
- Flat roofs were a feature of 1960-70s civic buildings, and low-pitched roofs on later examples. Brown or slate grey concrete roof tiles are typical roof coverings
- Generally, rather shallow detailing with minimum set backs at door and window reveals, creating rather flat, poorly modulated facades

Key		Address	Grade	Address	Grade
Listed buildings within St Neots locality		No. 12, High Street	II	The Priory Club, The Priory	II
Listed buildings within Eynesbury locality		No. 18, High Street	II	No. 3, New Street	II
Listed buildings within The Eatons locality		No. 10, High Street	II	No. 18, Market Square	II
		No. 14, High Street	II	No. 5, New Street	II
		Smithy & Stables at rear of No's. 15 & 17, South Street	II	No. 23, High Street	II
		No's. 1 & 3, (Kings Head Hotel), South Street	II	Pillar, (formerly the obelisk), Market Square	II
		No. 77, (The Globe PH), Huntingdon Street	II	No. 16, (Hilary House), Brook Street	II
		No. 11, Market Square	II	No. 26, Market Square	II
		No's. 35, 37 & 37a, Market Square	II	No's. 50 & 52, Market Square	II
		No. 7, Market Square	II	No. 46, Market Square	II
		No. 2, Huntingdon Street	II	No. 20, Market Square	II
		No. 19, South Street	II	No's. 11 & 13, South Street	II
		No. 57, High Street	II	No. 10, (Wrestlers Arms PH), New Street	II
		Walls, railings and gates at Brook House, Brook Street	II	No. 16, Market Square	II
		Garden wall, gate piers and gates of The Shrubbery, Church Street	II	No. 17, Church Street	II
		Brook House, Brook Street	III*	The Shrubbery, Church Street	II
		No. 44 Market Square	II	No's. 3a, 3b & 5, Brook Street	II
		No. 24, Market Square	II	No. 14, Brook Street	II
		No. 11, Cambridge Street	II	No. 18, (Church House), Brook Street	II
		No. 22, Market Square	II	No. 28, Cambridge Street	II
		No's. 16 & 17, Cambridge Street	II	No. 33, Church Street	II
		No's. 3 & 5, Cambridge Street	II	No. 9, Market Square	II
		No. 20, Brook Street	II	No's. 7, 9 & 11, Brook Street	II
		No. 12, (Constitutional Club), New Street	II	No. 6, Market Square	II
Address	Grade				
No. 8, (Burnside), Market Square	II				
No. 42, High Street	II				
No. 42, Market Square	II				
No. 38, (Paine's Brewery) Market Square	II				
No. 16, High Street	II				
Bull Inn PH (at rear of No. 34), Market Square	II				
The Priory, The Priory	II				
Bridge Hotel, Market Square	II				
No. 19, Cambridge Street	II				
No. 30, Market Square	II				
No's. 44 & 44a, Huntingdon Street	II				
No. 44, High Street	II				
No's. 24 & 26, High Street	II				
No. 21, Cambridge Street	II				
No. 23, Cambridge Street	II				
No. 40, Market Square	II				
No's. 29 & 31, Cambridge Street	II				
Malthouse behind the Priory Club, The Priory	II				
No's. 1 & 2, Brook Street, South Street	II				

St Neots Conservation Area Character Assessment

Address	Grade	Address	Grade	Address	Grade
No. 3, Market Square	II	No's. 25 & 27, Cambridge Street	II	No. 25, St Mary's Street, Eynesbury	II
No. 12, Huntingdon Street	II	Church of St Mary, Church Street	I	No. 36, St Mary's Street, Eynesbury	II
No's. 38 & 40, (Royal Oak Hotel), High Street	II	No. 15, Market Square	II	St Mary's School, Montague Street, Eynesbury	II
Morton House, Green End	II	Old Falcon Inn, Market Square	II	No. 25, Berkley Street, Eynesbury	II
St Neots Congregational Church, High Street	II	No. 3, (Corner House), St Mary's Street, Eynesbury	II	Berkley House, Berkley Lodge, Berkley Street, Eynesbury	II
No. 21, (Lloyds Bank), High Street	II	No's. 4 & 6, St Mary's Street, Eynesbury	II	Parish Church of St Mary, Berkley Street, Eynesbury	II
No. 9, High Street	II	No. 1, St Mary's Street, Eynesbury	II	No. 40, St Mary's Street, Eynesbury	II
Shortsands House, Green End	II	No. 2, Howitts Lane Eynesbury	II	No's. 46 & 48, St Mary's Street, Eynesbury	II
No. 26, (Vernon House), New Street	II	No. 5, Howitts Lane Eynesbury	II	Tudor House, St Mary's Street, Eynesbury	II*
No. 39, Market Square	II	No. 84, Luke Street, Eynesbury	II	Chequers Inn, St Mary's Street, Eynesbury	II
No. 28, Market Square	II	No. 8, St Mary's Street, Eynesbury	II	No. 10, St Mary's Street, Eynesbury	II
No. 14, New Street	II	Montague House, Montague Square, Eynesbury	II	No's. 42 & 44, St Mary's Street, Eynesbury	II
No. 16, New Street	II	No. 24, St Mary's Street, Eynesbury	II	No. 7, (Manor House), Berkley Street, Eynesbury	II
No. 18, New Street	II	No. 38, St Mary's Street, Eynesbury	II	No. 5, (Low Farmhouse), Barford Road, Eynesbury	II
Bedford Street Works, (Corn Mill) or Payne & Co. Ltd, Bedford Street	II	No's. 20 & 22, St Mary's Street, Eynesbury	II	Mrs Harveys Cottage, Montague Square, Eynesbury	II
No. 32, Paine's Brewery & related buildings forming 2 courtyards	II	No. 3, (Church House), Berkley Street, Eynesbury	II	No's. 12 & 12a, St Mary's Street, Eynesbury	II
Coach House in Vicarage Garden, Church Street	II	No. 21, Berkley Street, Eynesbury	II	No. 29, St Mary's Street, Eynesbury	II
The Vicarage, Church Street	II	The Ferns, Berkley Street, Eynesbury	II	No. 41, St Mary's Street, Eynesbury	II
No. 30, Cambridge Street	II	No. 23, Burkley Street, Eynesbury	II	No. 23, St Mary's Street, Eynesbury	II
No. 34, Paines Brewery & related buildings forming 2 courtyards	II	No. 24, Berkley Street, Eynesbury	II	No's. 31 & 33, St Mary's Street, Eynesbury	II
No. 36, Paines Brewery & related buildings forming 2 courtyards	II	No. 11, (The Laurels), Howitts Lane, Eynesbury	II	No. 37, (Shirdley House), Berkley Street, Eynesbury	II
Garages at The Shrubbery, Church Street	II	No. 26, Berkley Street, Eynesbury	II	Garden wall north east of No. 140, St Neots Road, Eaton Socon	II
No. 5, (Barclays Bank), Market Square	II	No. 64, (Marston House), Berkley Street, Eynesbury	II	No. 5, Peppercorn Lane, Eaton Socon	II
No. 13, (Cross Keys Hotel), Market Square	II	No. 27, St Mary's Street, Eynesbury	II	No. 162, (Trotwood Cottage), Great North Road, Eaton Socon	II

Address	Grade	Address	Grade
Parish Church of St Mary, The Green, Eaton Socon	II	No. 99, (Quaintways), St Neots Road, Eaton Socon	II
No. 140, (Ford House), St Neots Road, Eaton Socon	II*	No. 206, Great North Road, Eaton Socon	II
No. 11, Mill Hill Road, Eaton Socon	II	No. 168, St Neots Road, Eaton Socon	II
No. 92, Great North Road, Eaton Socon	II	No. 156, St Neots Road, Eaton Socon	II
White Horse Hotel, Great North Road, Eaton Socon	II	No. 164, (Falcon Cottage), Great North Road, Eaton Socon	II
No. 204, Great North Road, Eaton Socon	II	No. 160 & 162, St Neots Road, Eaton Socon	II
No. 168, (Ladygrove), Great North Road, Eaton Socon	II	No. 153, Great North Road, Eaton Socon	II
No. 267, (The George & Dragon Inn), Great North Road, Eaton Socon	II	Village Lock-up (The Cage), School Lane, Eaton Socon	II
The Old Sun Inn, Great North Road, Eaton Socon	II	No. 166, St Neots Road, Eaton Socon	II
No. 1, Eaton Ford Green, Eaton Socon	II	No. 168b, Great North Road, Eaton Socon	II
No. 101, Great North Road, Eaton Socon	II	No's. 184 & 186, (Wagon & Horses PH) Great North Road, Eaton Socon	II
No's. 2 & 4, Ackerman Street, Eaton Socon	II	White House (former workhouse), St Neots Road, Eaton Socon	II
No. 26, St Mary's Street, Eaton Socon	II	No. 108, Great North Road, Eaton Socon	II
No. 36, Ackerman Street, Eaton Socon	II	Eaton Mills, Scool Lane, Eaton Socon	II
No. 138, (Avenue Farm), St Neots Road, Eaton Socon	II	No. 90, Great North Road, Eaton Socon	II
Crosshall, Crosshall Road, Eaton Socon	II*	No. 6, Ackerman Street, Eaton Socon	II
The White House, Peppercorn Lane, Eaton Socon	II	No. 120, (Old Methodist Chapel), Great North Rad, Eaton Socon	II
No. 2, Eaton Ford Green, Eaton Socon	II	No. 179, (Eaton House), Great North Road, Eaton Socon	II
Duloe Hill Windmill, Duloe Road, Eaton Socon	II	Squires Farmhouse, (Crosshall), Great North Road, Eaton Socon	II
No. 99, (The Old Plough Inn), Great North Road, Eaton Socon	II	Garden Wall, Piers & gate of the former Hall Place now fronting No. 19	II
No. 111, Great North Road, Eaton Socon	II		
No. 134, Great North Road, Eaton Socon	II		
No. 138a, (Avenue Farm), St Neots Road, Eaton Socon	II		
No. 8, Ackerman Street, Eaton Socon	II		

Key Development Plan Policies

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan (adopted 2003). In particular, Ch. 7: "Resources, Environment & Heritage"

Huntingdonshire Local Plan (1997). In particular Ch. 7: Buildings of Architectural and Historic Interest, and Environment.

Huntingdonshire Local Plan Alteration (2002)

Regional Planning Guidance 14 (East of England Regional Assembly)

Huntingdonshire Design Guide (2003) Supplementary Planning Guidance

Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment (2003) Supplementary Planning Guidance

Reference Material

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Maps:

a. 25 " OS Maps, 1882, 1887, 1900, & 1950

b. OS Map 1 inch 1808

c. 1757 maps of St Neots from the Earl of Sandwich Estate Documents

d. 1770 St. Neots Enclosure Map

e. 1800 Eynesbury Enclosure Map

f. 1799 Eaton Socon Enclosure Map

g. 1822 Eaton Socon, Duke of Bedford's Eastate Map

h. 1838 Eaton Socon, Duke of Bedford's Estate Map

