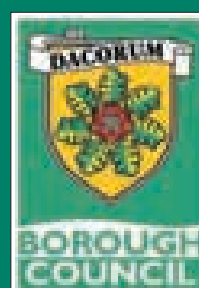


Aldbury Conservation Area



Character Appraisal & Management Proposals



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Produced by Dacorum Borough Council

Aldbury Conservation Area
Character Appraisal & Management Proposals

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Cover photographs: (Main picture) - *The luxuriantly green village pond and wooded backdrop, Aldbury*
Images left to right - *Greyhound Inn, Brownlow Cottages, Nos. 31,33 & 35 Stocks Road, Cottages at north end of village on east side of Stocks Road*

Rear cover: (Main picture) - *Village Green, looking north*

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Part 1 Conservation Area Character Appraisal

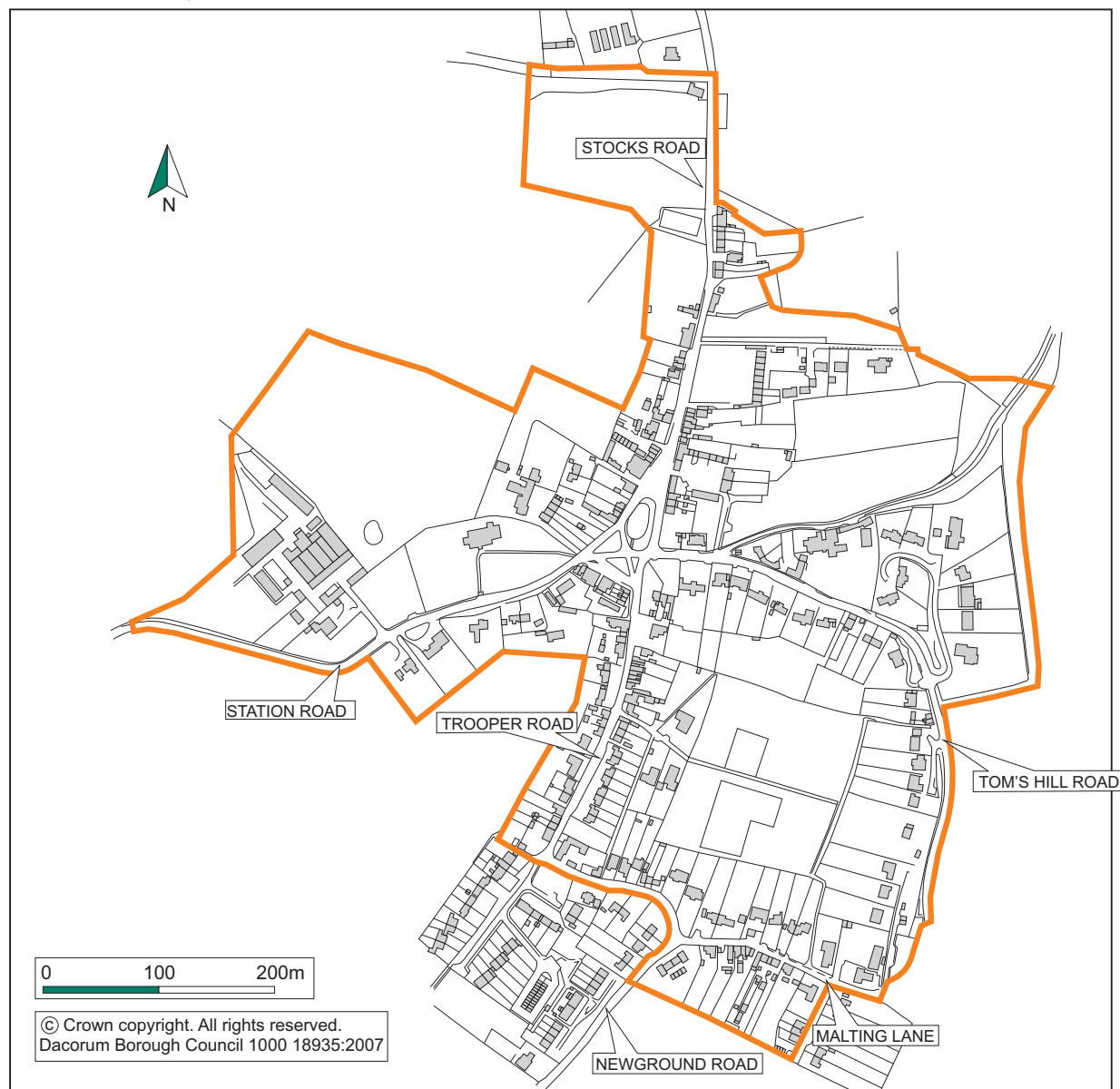
1 Introduction

Aldbury Conservation Area is defined by the nucleated village settlement situated at the scarp foot of the Chilterns. This 'quintessential' village with triangular green, pond and stocks at its heart, retains a fine selection of predominantly vernacular buildings dating from the medieval period to the present. The historical development of Aldbury has been influenced by the wood-pasture characteristics of the surrounding landscape and moulded by its intimate relationship with the once powerful estates which encircled it, particularly Ashridge, but also Pendley and Stocks.

The Aldbury Conservation Area was first designated in 1968, and was subsequently revised and extended in 1977. Conservation areas are designated under the provisions of Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. A conservation area is defined as “an area of special architectural or historical interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.”

Section 71 of the same Act requires local planning authorities to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of these conservation areas. Section 72 also

Map 1: Aldbury Conservation Area



specifies that, in making a decision on an application for development in a conservation area, special attention should be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

Although new development and change will always take place in conservation areas, the main purpose of designation is to ensure that any proposals will not have an adverse effect upon the overall character and appearance of an area. Part 1 (The "Appraisal") highlights the special qualities and features that underpin Aldbury's character and justify its designation. Guidelines provided in Part 2 ("Management Proposals") are designed to prevent harm and encourage enhancement. This type of assessment conforms to English Heritage Guidance and to Government Advice (PPG 15).

It also supports and amplifies those policies aimed at protecting the overall character of conservation areas and forming part of Dacorum Borough Council's Local Development Plan Framework:

Policy 120.1 Designation as a conservation area provides the opportunity to preserve or enhance an area of architectural or historic interest by controlling building demolition and the design, scale and proportions of extensions and new development, as well as the type and colour of materials used.

Policy 121.1 There is a need to control inappropriate types of permitted development which would be detrimental to a conservation area. [Dacorum Borough Local Plan 1991-2011]



2 Location and Setting

Location

The rural village of Aldbury is situated in the north-west of Dacorum Borough, 12 kilometres (7½ miles) north of the urban settlement of Hemel Hempstead, 3 kilometres (2¾ Miles) east and 7 kilometres (4 miles) north west of the rural towns of Tring and Berkhamsted respectively.

Boundaries

The conservation area encompasses the majority of the historic nucleated settlement at the scarpfoot of the Chilterns. It includes parcels of land within the built area as well as to the north and west of the village. The only buildings adjacent to the boundary but excluded from it are the cluster of houses at Stoneycroft, properties to the south side of Malting Lane at its eastern upper end, and Greenings Farm at the north end of the village. Beyond, the



Aldbury: view from track off Malting Lane

Conservation Area also does not include those parts of the parish situated on the ridge above the village, nor the detached 'railway settlement' around Tring Station and the Grand Union Canal.



Village Green, looking north

Topography and Landscape Setting

The village nestles under the western Chilterns escarpment in a broad bowl-shaped coombe, derived from glacial erosion of the chalk; it is largely contained by the slopes of Aldbury Nowers to the north-west and the escarpment slopes below Ashridge.

The scarpfoot setting of the village means it borrows a little from three very different types of landscape. Steeply ascending to nearly 700ft. to the east is Aldbury common, a mature wooded landscape which merges with Ashridge, a designated Park of Special Historic Interest. Here the landscape is dominated by commons, woods and downs with piecemeal enclosures cleared from woodland in the medieval period. To the north, by contrast, lies the heavy clay of the Aylesbury Vale, once dominated by large open fields but where an early transition from arable to grassland has preserved the medieval field patterns. Between hill and vale, the chalk washed down from the hills is responsible for the rich creamy texture of the wide open fields spread over the dry valley floor to the south and south-west of the village.

Parliamentary Enclosure by-passed Aldbury parish, the hills retaining their open common and woodland, and the valley much of its pre C18th organic enclosure pattern. The rare, near medieval landscape surrounding the village is a key ingredient of the Village Conservation Area's special appearance and flavour. The Landscape

Character Assessment for Dacorum issued as Supplementary Planning Guidance in May 2004 contains further analysis of the village's landscape character (*see especially pp.85 - 92*).

Geology

The underlying rock is Middle Chalk, overlain by calcareous flinty gravels and sands to varying depths, derived from the Pleistocene ice.

Archaeology

A large square enclosure with an outer ditch is sited behind the church land (HERS ID: 2625; Grid Ref: SP 9626 1255). This may be the site of the deserted manor house with the skeleton of a formal garden in evidence. *See Aerial photo (page 2)*

A 'Belgic' burial group was excavated in 1943 by a group of local inhabitants. The finds comprised two urns containing cremated remains, and in association a butt beaker and carinated beaker (both of 'Belgic black ware'), a grey ware urn and many associated potsherds. These were originally thought to date to c.50 BC, but the presence of the butt beaker dates the group later than c.10 BC. (HERS ID: 4242; Grid Ref: SP9667 1270)

Much of the Conservation Area is designated as an Area of Archaeological Significance. Developers should refer to Policy 118 of the Dacorum Borough Local Plan 1991-2011.

View from Station Road



3 The Historical Development of the Village

The sections of the Icknield Way and Grims Ditch which run through the parish suggest Aldbury was already an ancient settlement by the time of the Domesday Survey of 1086, where it appears as *Elderberie*, itself meaning 'old burh', or old fortification. The village green forms the heart of Aldbury, at the intersection of roads from Tring to Little Gaddesden and from Berkhamsted to Ivinghoe; the parish church and deserted manor site were well established nearby in the C13th. In 1271 there were 68 households; small copyhold farmsteads fringed the edge of the Green (a number of these farmsteads still surviving in relict form today). Their holdings were scattered in the huge open fields to the north, west and south of the village; to the east, commons provided pannage for pigs and grazing for sheep. In the absence of any powerful family, Aldbury escaped the kind of fate that destroyed the neighbouring village of Pendley, which was emparked in 1440 by the Harcourt family.

A number of buildings that survive in the village bear testimony to the relatively prosperous late C15th and early C16th, when open halls were constructed and then improved later in the C16th with the insertion of floors and chimneys. Alongside agricultural growth, associated trades such as blacksmithing and weaving flourished.



'Old House and Stocks, Aldbury', by Albany C. Howard

But with prosperity and a rising population also came poverty, and a physical expression of the need to provide for the poor is reflected in the survival of the almshouses (or Town House), parts of which may date back to the Tudor period.

During the C17th, the continuing absence of any major landowner was exploited by the village farmers who extended their landholdings by converting former woodland to arable and meadow; in 1691 the ancient copyholds were converted to freeholds. But, on the whole, the second half of the C17th saw the village's prosperity decline, some hint of recovery only occurring at the end of the century when the dilapidated manor house was demolished and sold for scrap; village buildings were repaired, and a new maltings built on site of an old farmhouse, lending its name to Malting Lane.

In the C18th the hold of the farmers on the village began to be eclipsed by the emergence of more substantial landowners. In 1773 Stocks (just outside and to the north of the Conservation area) was rebuilt as a substantial house by the Duncombe family, who, in the absence of a strong manorial (or rectorial) presence had acquired 'The Old Manor House' on the pond (1722) Town Farm (1757) and other houses ('Timbers', Toms Hill Farm etc.), eventually to form an estate of some 550 acres.

In the opening years of the C19th, estate influences in the village began to shift from Stocks to Ashridge, (east of the Conservation area); the 7th Earl of Bridgewater remodelled the main house and then as Lord of the Manor, began to stamp his mark on the village; particularly around the church and green – the old manorial and Chantry Farm sites were redeveloped as Church Farm; cottages were demolished and rebuilt; Ebelthite's Farm was replaced with a striking terrace of eight cottages ('Barrack Row'). These reflected two trends: the influence of the new Grand Junction Canal (in the south-west corner of the parish), which brought the first slates to the village (it was then called 'Slated Row') and the need to accommodate a rapidly increasing population. Some enterprising tradesmen also capitalised on this growth by undertaking more speculative building; some examples survive in Malting Lane, and at the top of Toms Hill, but many poorly constructed cottages and hovels have since disappeared. And so, despite the Bridgewater's efforts and despite the fact there had been signs of a revival of religious life; (the dilapidated rectory had been rebuilt, and a Baptist Chapel constructed), Aldbury was still being described in 1846 as 'a very rough place'.

Subsequent projects, principally spearheaded by the two chief landowners at Ashridge and Stocks, with the influence of the Rector, went some way

to rectify this - the school (1856) the church restoration (1867) and the Memorial Hall and Almshouses (1889) all aimed to enhance or address the lack of village amenities. The population reached a peak in 1881; a major industry (but leaving not a single physical mark on the village) at this time was straw-plaiting; it staved off some of the effects of Agricultural Depression in the late C19th, an emerging tourism industry also began to bolster the village's economy, helping to sustain several places of refreshment, such as the long-established Greyhound Inn and Valiant Trooper, but also tea rooms and small shops selling antiques, postcards and souvenirs.

Increasing numbers of day trippers, who admired the village's charm, decided to settle permanently; the development of the 'commuter' village in the C20th witnessed the injection of new life into the ailing building stock; but equally, poor investment decisions have seen traditional fabric being eroded by some insensitive redevelopment, unsympathetic design and the introduction of alien materials. The challenge in the C21st is to preserve those elements that define the rich character of the village whilst enhancing its future by encouraging design, refurbishment and, where appropriate, new development of the highest quality and standards.



Ashridge, seat of the Bridgewater family

4 Surviving Historical Features within the Conservation Area

Summary of Historical Features

- Village Green, Pond, Stocks and Whipping Post
- The Old Manor House (Late medieval)
- The Old Post Cottage (c.1810)
- Greyhound and adjoining Cottages (C18th?)
- No 39, Stocks Road (former cruck building)
- Baptist Chapel (1830s)
- Former Village Farms, (Town Farm, Nos 31-35, 40, 44, & 53, Stocks Road) with timber-framed farmhouses but farm buildings either lost, hidden behind or converted)
- Almshouses (Nos 47,49 & 51, Stocks Road) -formerly pair, then three, then four cottages
- 'Barrack Row' (early C19th) - Bridgewater estate cottages
- Late C19th cottages facing pond on site of former Kings Head Beer House
- Aldbury clubhouse (WW1 Memorial)
- The Old Rectory (1928 on site of earlier rectory) and Galleon Cottage
- Brownlow Cottages (1855)
- Old Bakehouse, Trooper Road
- No 25, Trooper Road (Sear's Cottage)
- The Valiant Trooper Inn and Outbuildings
- Cottages in Malting Lane (East Side)
- Nos 42 & 44, Trooper Lane
- Former shops, No 14 & No 20, Trooper Road
- Former Isolation Hospital (No 12, Trooper Road)
- Memorial Hall and Almshouses (1889)
- Church Farm House
- Church (Grade 1 listed)
- Chantry Row Cottages with Wellhouse and Bakehouse
- School (1856) & Schoolhouse (1878)
- Relict shop fronts (e.g No. 39 Stocks Road)
- Other timber-framed buildings (e.g No 12, Stocks Road, Church Cottages, Station Road)

Street Pattern and Building Plots

The four roads into Aldbury approach the village along the main compass points across relatively open countryside. They then suddenly pinch in at the entrances into the village, hedgerows or steep banks and trees concealing views of what is to come, before opening out again into the historic core of the village centred on the green and pond. Stocks Road and Trooper Road are the main north to south thoroughfare; together these once formed the High Street or Townway. Running along the valley-bottom they are relatively flat, in contrast to the other two approaches. Station Road, the main approach road from Tring, descends into Aldbury from the open undulating landscape to the west of the village (it was re-aligned in the early C19th when Church Farm was built). Continuing to the east is Toms Hill Road, lined with predominantly post 1939 properties; sweeping round to the south east it ascends steeply out of the conservation area up and into the contrasting wooded landscape of Aldbury common and Ashridge Park.

Map 2: 1766 Village Map (Dury and Andrews)



The Parish Church, Church Farm, school and Chantry Cottages are scattered in large plots in the elbow of Station Road, but this changes suddenly on the west side of Stocks Road where the plots are compact, the meadows behind defining a relatively shallow rear boundary (The Percy Crow footpath follows it). On the east side of Stocks Road, properties tend to have broader frontages – these are the relict medieval copyhold farms, some retaining the large closes and orchards which stretch up the hillside to the rear. Dotted up the south side of Tom's Hill, the few older properties in small constrained plots cling close to the road's edge; to the north, the former Rectory sits discretely behind roadside buildings in the crutch of the triangular plot formed by Toms Hill Road and the magnificent sunken lane that runs up to the Common behind it. Immediately behind the generous and spacious green, cottages jostle for a position overlooking the narrow North End of Trooper Road; half way down, the settlement pattern loosens into wider closes before reaching the nodal clustering of early buildings where the road cranks eastwards at the Valiant Trooper. To its rear, a pattern of small, compact plots switches at the junction with Malting Lane from the north to the south side with clusters of cottages climbing up the scarp.

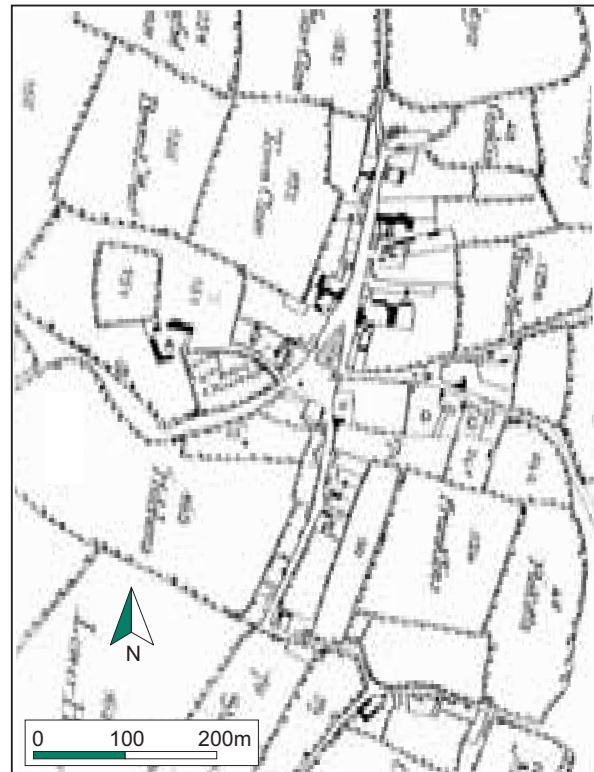
Development at the rear of plots on the south side of Toms Hill, east side of Troopers Road and north side of Malting Lane has been constrained since the early part of the C20th by the creation and management of a large rectangular expanse



View of Tom's Hill Road

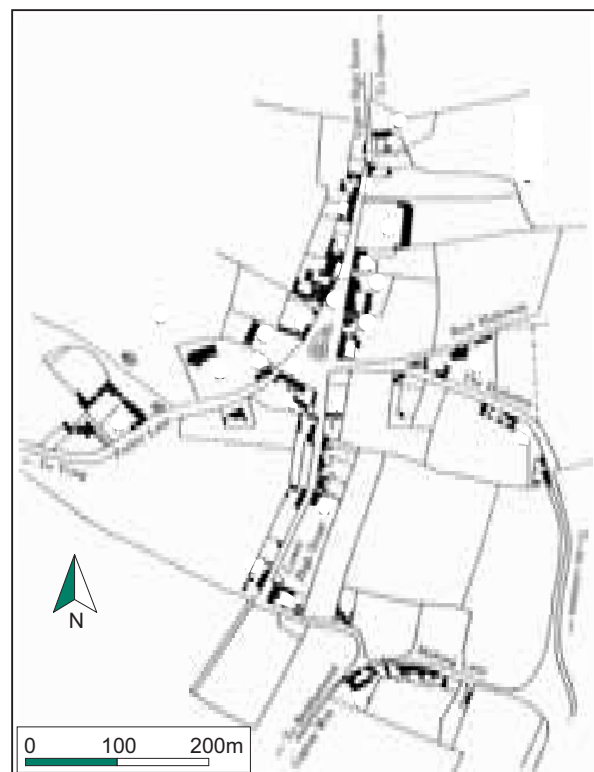
of recreation ground/allotment area. Remarkably well concealed from any of the roads, this open space is the key determining landscape feature of the whole southern half of the Conservation Area.

Map 3: 1803 Map (Source: Jean Davis, 1987)



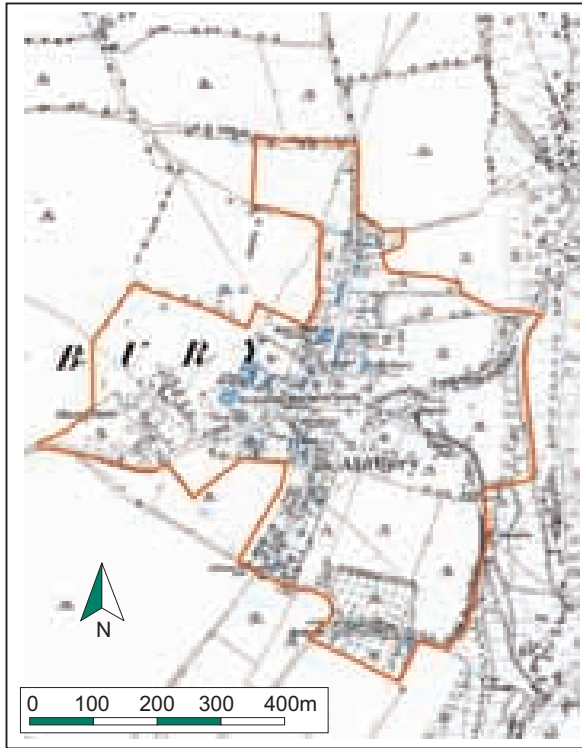
Map 4: Tithe Map, 1840

(Source: Jean Davis, 1987)

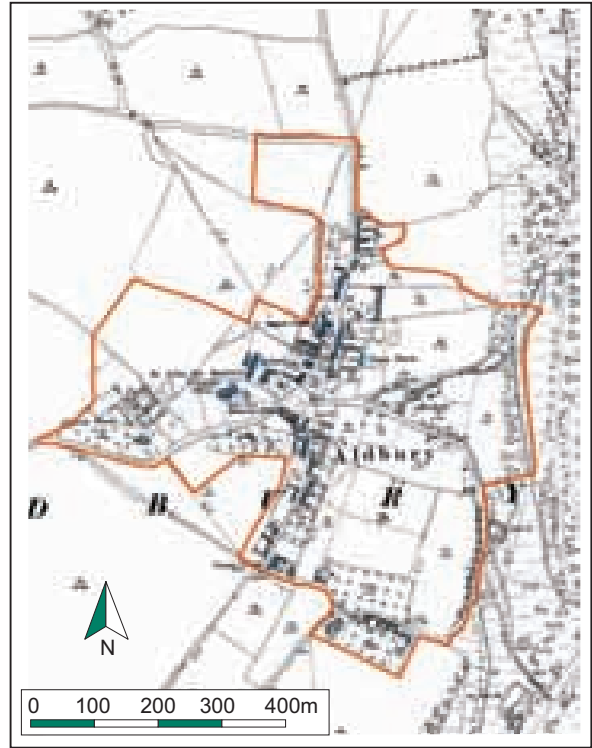


Maps of Aldbury

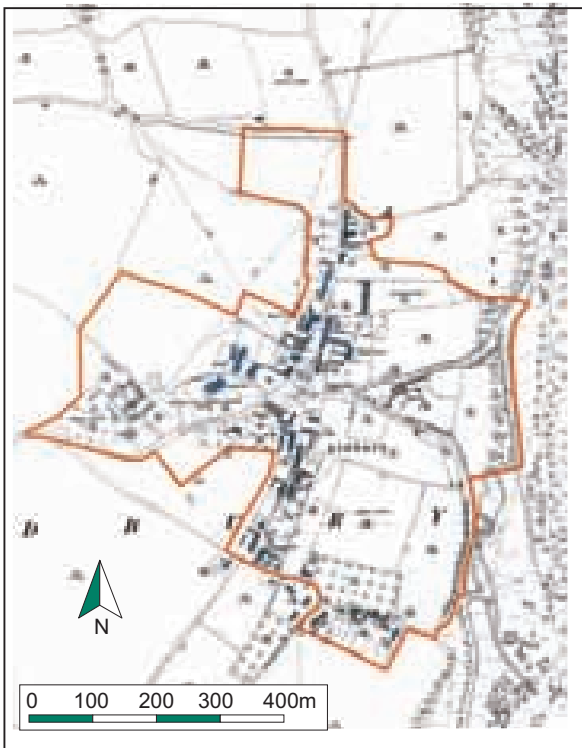
Map 5: 1878 - 1892



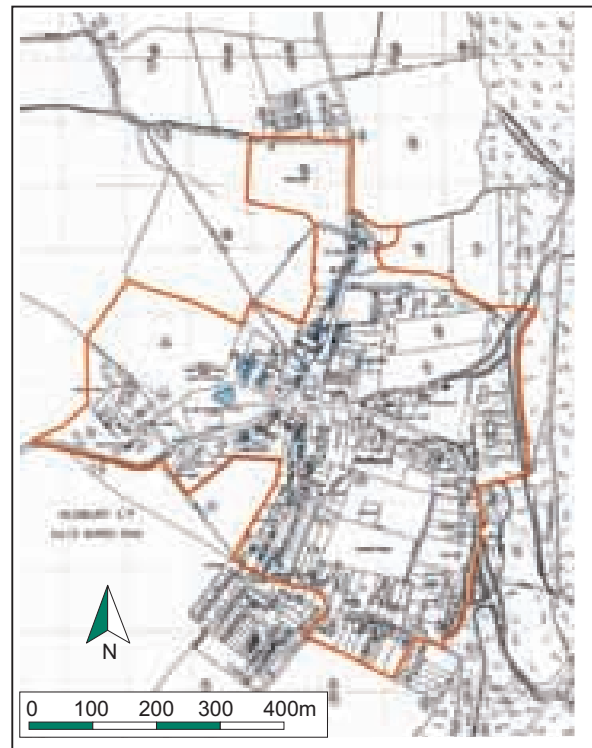
Map 6: 1889 - 1901



Map 7: 1924 - 1926



Map 8: 1962 - 1979



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5 The Character and Appearance of the Conservation Area

Analysis

The rich texture of Aldbury Conservation Area derives from its unique topographical setting, nestling under the dominant wooded escarpment of Aldbury Common to the east. This dramatic backdrop, combined with the associated landscape features such as narrow hedged lanes and hollow tracks, helps to anchor the built features into the landscape. It also provides crucial glimpses from the wooded escarpment over the village, reinforcing the importance of the low-built scale of the buildings and the uncluttered roofscape. The views also illustrate how the surrounding landscape penetrates deeply into the built environment – scarpland trees, trackways and hedgerows run seamlessly into it and blur the edges between village and countryside.

The character of Aldbury conservation area is essentially that of a well-preserved historic village that has developed around a 'tight' medieval core and whose surviving fabric and topography still evokes much of its medieval agricultural origins. Successive architectural styles have nevertheless been successfully accommodated with modest buildings, yards and ancillary structures developing in what appears at first sight to be a relatively 'unplanned' way. Yet the overall pattern of growth has resulted in three identifiable areas with their particular, though by no means exclusive, characteristics. The Station Road area (Area 1) including the south end of the Green, has the feel of an estate village, with a cluster of amenity and residential buildings all bearing the stamp of landowning influences. Although all three zones retain some early buildings, Stocks Road (Area 2) to the north exhibits the greatest density of timber-framing intermixed with early brick buildings. The seamless transition between village and open countryside is strongest here. The third 'southern' zone, embracing houses in Troopers Road, Malting Lane and Toms Hill Road (Area 3) delineates the entire periphery of the allotments/recreation ground, and has a more eclectic assortment of buildings; this area, the

location of most of the speculative building in the C18th and C19th, has continued to absorb virtually all the C20th expansion of the village.

Summary of Townscape Features

- Medieval origins
- Historic core – pond and green
- Views over the village
- Relatively low-built, two-storey houses with mostly single storey ancillary buildings
- Timber-framed buildings with steep pitched tiled roofs prominent although numerically brick houses and cottages pre-dominate, with tiled or slate roofs. One prominent thatched building is sole survivor of a more common roofing material. Brick chimneys punctuate the roofscape.
- Views into rear courtyards
- Paths – permeable settlement, linking village to estates, transport hubs
- Boundary treatments – shallow or non-existent frontages punctuated by a few key buildings set back from the road
- Estate influences

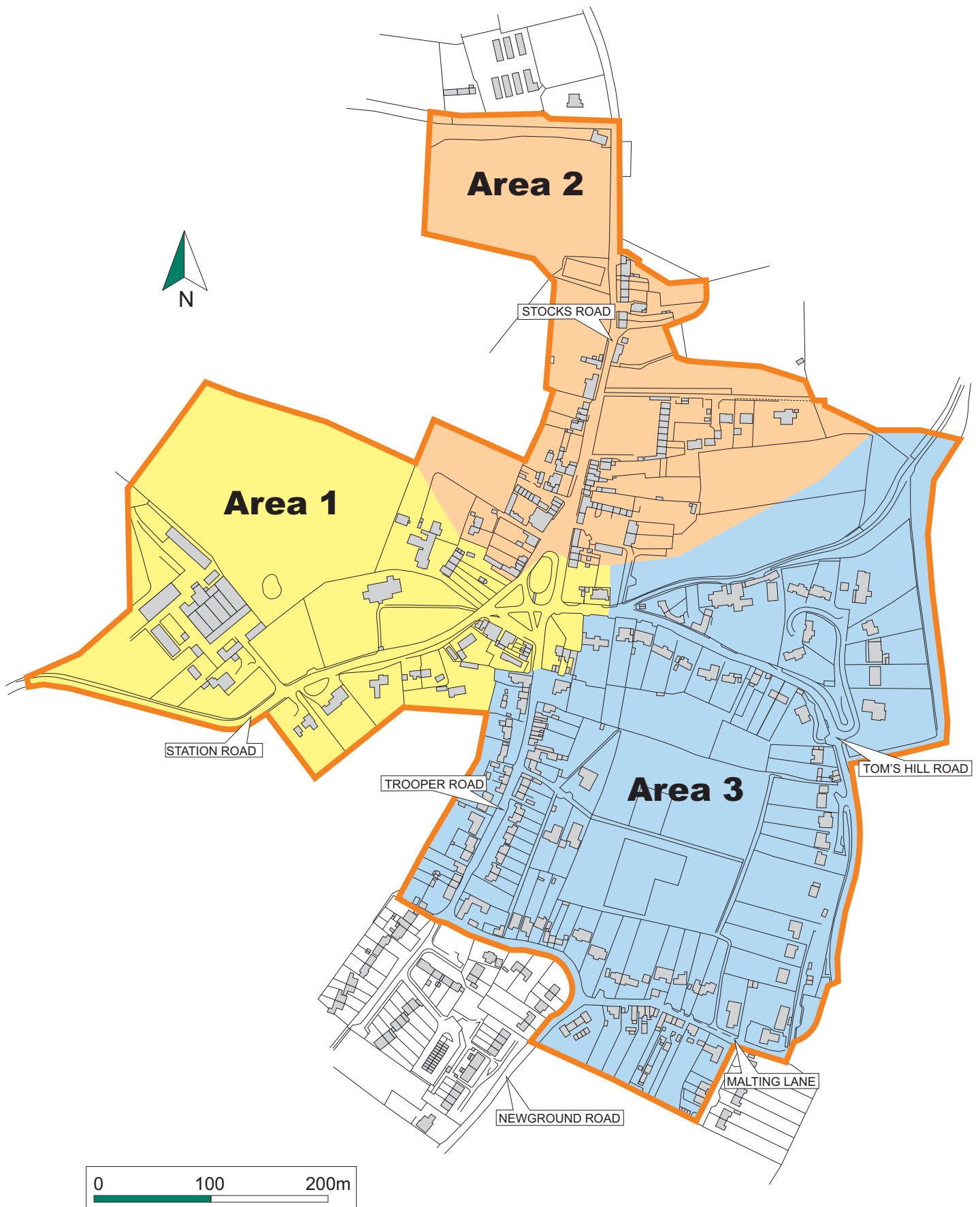
Current Activities and Uses

In the C20th, Aldbury's character switched from being predominantly agricultural to that of a commuter village; many buildings formerly in other uses such as shops and farm buildings have been converted to residential (or small-scale office) use. No industrial buildings survive, although a garage still operates from Trooper Road.



Converted barns to rear of Town Farm

Map 9: Character Areas



Equestrian pasture occupies much of the lower lying land surrounding the village, horse-riders sharing lanes and paths with walkers and cyclists. The village is also a magnet for day trippers; tourism helping to support the two public houses and one remaining shop (though the Town Farm tea rooms and Stocks Hotel have now closed).

Aldbury retains a strong village identity reinforced physically through its amenities - allotments, infants school, clubhouse, inns and hall; through its organisational structure - parish council and village groups, and through events staged in the village such as the May fair, as well as frequent appearances in film and t.v. sets.

Focal Points, Views and Vistas

The village's topography and wider landscape surrounding it provide spectacular views of the surrounding countryside as well as offering views into the village. Ascending any of the scarp tracks provides glimpses and sometimes wider panoramas of the village.

Views out of the village are abundant – towards the wooded backdrop of Ashridge, over the meadows and closes each side of Stocks Road, over the large fields to the south and east, and towards Aldbury Nowers to the north-west. Some views are punctuated by landmark structures - the church standing up on its higher ground, Stocks to the north-west, the Monument up on the escarpment to the north-east.

Views within the village are rich and varied. From the focal point of the green, the lens is drawn effortlessly towards the Old Manor House; but equally views along any of the four roads leading into the village encourage some radial exploration because of the individual texture each streetscape appears to offer.

Other nodal viewing points are:

- a) from the allotment area; broad views of the north and east of the village are to be had from where the land rises towards its eastern boundary
- b) from the Churchyard/east end of Church down Station Road towards the village green
- c) from the bottom of Malting Lane looking up the hill towards the scarp slope



View north with Ashridge woods to the right



Looking west towards Town Farm



Looking east up Malting Lane



Trooper Road, looking north

- d) from the entrance to Stoneycroft back up Trooper Road
- e) from the bottom of the path which runs down the north side of Barrack Row back along Stocks Road towards the Green

Significant buildings occupy strategic points in the streetscape – Maunders near the northern entrance into the village, mirrored by Nos 42-44, Trooper Road at the south end, both timber-framed buildings jutting into the road where it alters course; the Bridgewater cottages flanking the bottom of Toms Hill Road (looking east from the Green); Galleon Cottage on the road side of Toms Hill; these all provide key punctuation marks which reinforce the identity of a particular area or section of street scene.



View looking south from Maunders on bend of road

Despite its relatively compact form, the sense of discovery – of views suddenly opening up - is also a key feature of the village. Walking up Stocks Road, Nos. 31-35 and 'Timbers' are timber buildings recessed from the road, 'framed' by adjacent brick buildings; these run into a small courtyard tucked away at the rear of the Greyhound Cottages.



Courtyard to rear of the Greyhound Cottages

Conversely, the 'Barracks' - an impressively elongated row of brick buildings - is set back and 'framed' by roadside timber-framed buildings. Views into courtyard complexes – at the back of Town Farm, or the Greyhound, or Church Farm – add occasional depth where the topography allows.

Some buildings, such as the Baptist Chapel, the School, the Rectory, or even the village well/bakehouse, remain largely hidden, adding to the sense of cumulative discovery as one strays further from the focal point of the green.

Open Spaces, Landscape and Trees

The openness of the centre of the village provides a node of interest with winding roads extending outwards to the various points of the village. The Playing Fields and Allotments provide key public open spaces at the top and bottom end of the village respectively.

A strong characteristic of Aldbury is its network of paths in and around the village; these link the open spaces, viewpoints, places of interest, and key structures and create a permeable townscape that invites pedestrian exploration. Many buildings can be viewed from front and back; extensions cannot be hidden so easily from view. Similarly, the special qualities of the conservation area are not limited to the buildings but also the spaces between them. Views can be easily interrupted by clumsy or inappropriate side extensions.

The character of the Conservation Area is enhanced and softened by the amount of green planting.

Hedgerows are important delineators of boundaries in Aldbury. They fall mainly into four groups

- **at the rear of properties** – these hedgerows tended to be established early and mark the break between individual closes and larger fields or meadows – the best example runs along the Percy Crow path at the rear of properties backing onto what was once Town Close on the west side of Stocks Road. Another strong hedgerow boundary defines the rear of the properties on the south side of



The Allotments



Lane beside Barrack Row



Formal hedging in Stocks Road

Station Road; less defined but also probably an early boundary is that to the rear of the properties on the west side of Trooper Road. The hedgerow at the rear of the Churchyard has benefited from being traditionally laid. These hedgerows contain field maple, oak, elder, hawthorn and some hazel and ash.

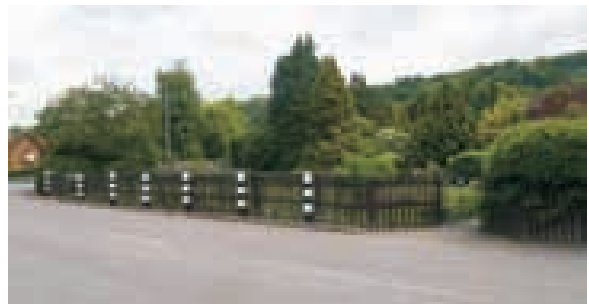
- **hedging at the front or sides** of properties tends to be more individualistic with more exotic planting; sometimes the hedging is highly manicured – the topiary to the Old Post Cottage is perhaps the most visually striking example. An early relict hedgerow can be seen in front of Church Cottages, and includes some coppiced hazel. Front hedge boundaries tend to define those properties which are set back from the road – such as Barrack Row, Chantry Cottages or the properties on the south side of Station Road; they contrast to the simple picket fences or lack of any boundary treatment to the roadside properties.
- **hedging of lanes** – all the approaches into Aldbury are lined with hedges, some on steep banks; these are strong landscape elements which act as entry 'pinch' points and contribute to the sense of discovery of the village beyond.
- **hedging which encloses, or partially enclose public open spaces** such as the playing fields (an ancient close once called Haw Close) or the allotment gardens – the latter has an early boundary bordering an enclosed meadow at its north end and a younger hedge on its eastern side which provides a virtual total screen to the backs of the houses lining Toms Hill.

Trees contribute in groups, clusters and as individual specimens to the 'green' aspect of Aldbury

- **the predominantly beech and ash** woodland on the scarp slope defines the setting of the village on the eastern side of the conservation area, and blends seamlessly into the tree screens which conceal the houses on the upper part of the Toms Hill Road/Beechwood Drive; the tree screen continues down on the north side, yew is particularly evident here.



Tom's Hill Road, looking west

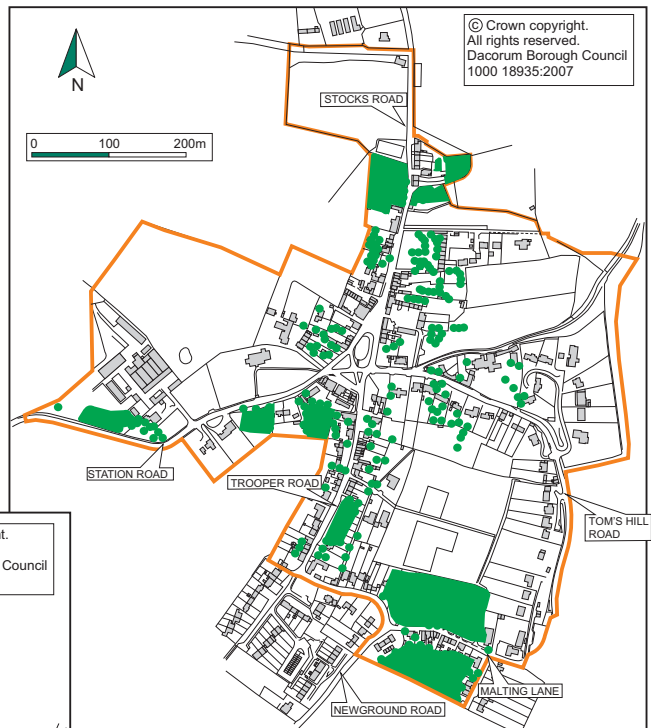


North End of Troopers Road

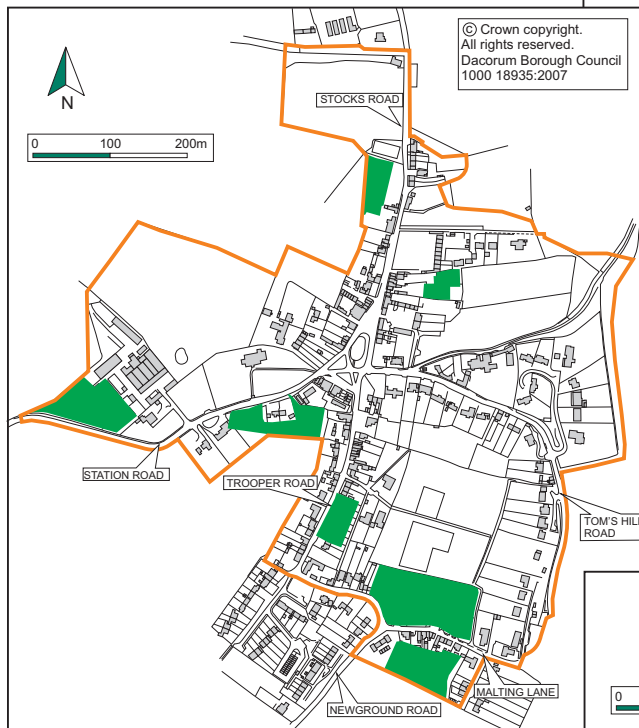
- **clusters of trees appear randomly** - for example the fine limes in the churchyard- or in a more formal groups such as the avenue leading to the Church farmstead.
- **orchards** are part of Aldbury's historic character, significant enough to be shown on Dury and Andrews 1766 map of Hertfordshire. Eight orchards were present along Stocks Road and to the south of the village. By 1880 six of these still survived alongside new plantings at Church Farm, Malting Lane and Town Farm with fruit trees scattered throughout the village. The largest orchards survived into the interwar period with another along Newground Road, although one had been lost to housing. None of these survive as recognisable orchards today, but their remnants still provide a profound historic link, reflecting the importance of orchards within our environment.
- **individual trees.** On the Village Green, the oak replaced an old elm felled in 1976. The lime on the little green was planted in 1897, Victoria's Jubilee Year. There is a fine mature tree in the field to the rear of the Church, possibly a sole survivor of the lost manorial gardens. In private gardens, trees again tend to be more exotic than those in publicly accessible areas – an interesting collection can be seen on both sides at the bottom end of Toms Hill Road.

Map 10: Orchards

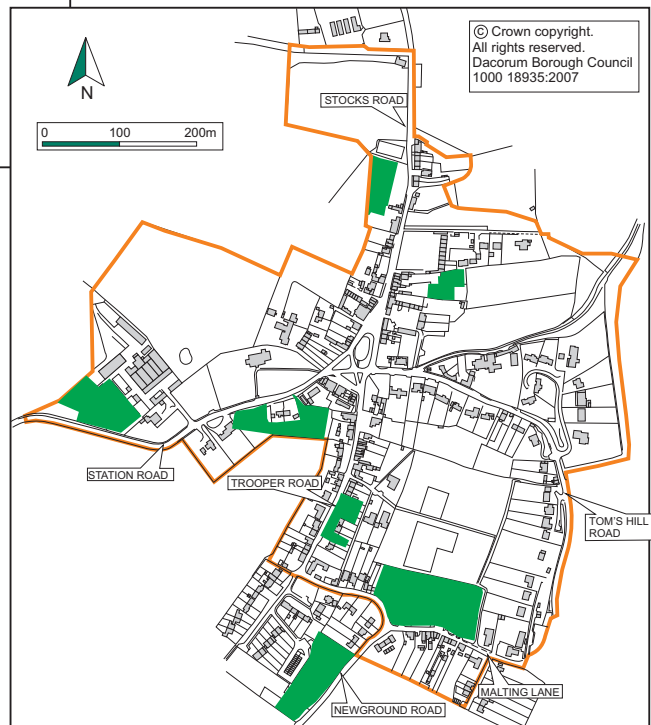
Orchards 1878-1892



Orchards 1889-1901



Orchards 1924-1926



Public Realm: Floorscape, Street Lighting and Street Furniture

A striking feature of the village is the absence of pavements. Kerbing in the village for the most part has been deliberately restricted to a 2" (50mm) depth so as to remain unobtrusive. Tarmac runs quickly out into chalk/flint or grassy pathways. The two public spaces at each end of the village – the Playing Fields and Allotments/Recreation Ground are generally soft landscaped; the strip of car park to the former is hidden behind the hedge and safety surfaces are restricted to individual items of equipment in the playground. Signage in the village has generally been kept to a minimum. The dominant example



Signpost on Village Green - This photograph was taken prior to the road changes which took place in 2008

of a traditional form of signage in the village is the wooden replica fingerpost sign in the centre of the village on the green.

The absence of street lighting maintains the village character. Seating of an appropriate design is provided on the village green. The stocks and whipping post require a long-term repair strategy as they are of considerable historic interest and form a key visual anchor on the village green. The village also retains a red K6 cast iron telephone kiosk on Trooper Road; designed by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott in 1935 (Grade 2 listed).



Telephone Kiosk, Trooper Road



This photograph shows the loss of the lane to the left of the signpost. Some of the unobtrusive kerbing around the Green has also now unfortunately been raised.

6 Character Areas

Identification of Character Areas

Aldbury village can be divided into zones with distinctive characteristics which relate to their architecture, historic development and also landscape.

The Character Areas are

Area 1: The 'Estate' Village

Area 2: The North: Stocks Road

Area 3: The South: Allotments

AREA 1: The 'Estate Village'

The 'Estate Village' (the 'estate' element referring to the influence of the Bridgewater estate at Ashridge) has been grafted onto the village's medieval core, developing around the two key focal points of the Church and the southern end of the village green. Both residential and social amenity buildings, mostly stamped with the Bridgewater mark, cluster somewhat randomly around them, but their 'polite' architecture and spacious, quite manicured plots imbue them with a sense of contrived paternalism. Church Farmhouse sets the tone immediately on approaching the village from the west by Station Road; built by the Bridgewaters c.1830 it is an imposing example of late Georgian pattern book architecture. The planned courtyard of farm buildings to the north of the farmhouse (now converted) is set back from the road, the long straight drive leading to its defined arched entrance. The distinguished flint and brick boundary wall of Church Farm runs seamlessly into the churchyard wall fronting Station Road. The Parish Church (Grade 1 listed) is the principal landmark in the village and appears in the majority of the views into and within the village. Built of coursed flint work with Totternhoe and bath stone dressings, it dates from the C13th with later C14th and C15th alterations and additions; the whole was restored in the C19th. Tucked in at the rear is also an interesting C20th brick and flint extension in the shape of a bishop's cope.



Church Farm

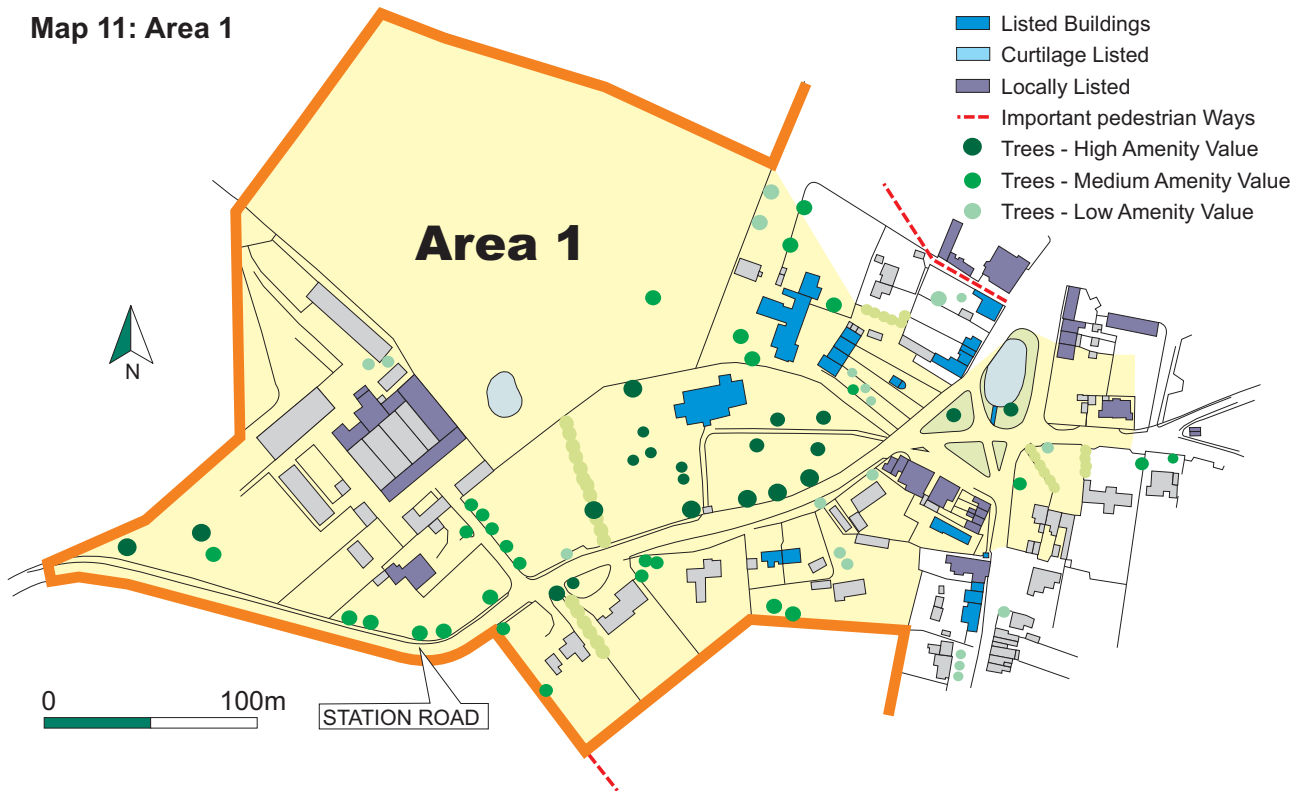


Wall to Church Farm



The Village School

Map 11: Area 1



Passing through the eastern end of the churchyard and out into the Village Green, Bridgewater estate influences can be glimpsed to the north (the village school and Chantry Cottages), to the south (The Memorial Hall and Almshouses, heavily gabled) and to the east (Brownlow Cottages flanking the bottom of Tom's Hill Road). Tell-tale estate features are the brown/yellow estate bricks, tall and prominently detailed brick chimneys, patterned clay peg-tile roofs and latticed cast iron windows. However, within this area, the sense of a strict model

village is softened and relieved by a few anomalies - for example, the post-1939 detached properties, including the most recent parsonage, sit quietly back on the south side of Station Road as it sweeps down into the village; the adjacent timber-framed vernacular Church Cottages all reflect the fact that the Bridgewaters did not completely dominate the village.

Negative features:

- Repairs to boundary walls
- Parking at churchyard
- Telephone Exchange



Brownlow Cottages



The Post Office and Memorial Hall

AREA 2: The North: Stocks Road

Stocks Road approaches Aldbury as a narrow hedged lane, opening out into the Playing Fields at the north end of the village; houses then mainly front the road on both sides as it continues to the core of the settlement where it bells out into the wedge-shaped village centre. (This actually comprises three spaces – a principal parking area in front of the Greyhound Inn, the pond, and the Village green itself.)

The North area has a particularly strong identity; the majority of buildings are of architectural or historic interest and are listed. Evidence of the medieval origin of the village is much in evidence; characteristic vernacular architecture is abundant; modest timber-framed houses –



Town Farm, Stocks Road

neatly illustrating their development in microcosm with examples of crucks, open halls, jetties, cross-wings and panel framing - line the road and are visually dominant. There are also some double-fronted detached brick houses. Surviving shop fronts provide evidence of former retail premises. There are some long brick terraces – the row of cottages attached to the Greyhound Inn on the west side and the long roadside terrace (Nos. 50 –68) on the east side, together with Barrack Row, conversely set well away from the road. Tucked away behind this imposing example of estate housing (designed to accommodate the labouring poor) are a cluster of detached houses - the only C20th buildings to intrude into this area and, in facing north, unfortunately disrupting the natural grain of the streetscape.

Map 12: Area 2





Nos 31,33 & 35 Stocks Road



Simple tiled roofs to barn and outbuilding, Stocks Road

There is a definite rural quality to this area with a number of properties having closes of land to the rear. Some, such as Town Farm and Applegarth retain their former agricultural outbuildings; these extend to the side and rear in both cases. Where the buildings are not hard up against the roadside, white picket fencing, mature hedges and low-level brick or brick and flint walls create a settled and well cared for streetscape, characteristic of a picturesque, archetypal English village.

Negative features:

Central car park detracts from the appearance of the historic core
 Some loss of traditional windows, particularly destroying uniformity of terraces



Cottages at north end of village on east side of Stocks Road



Nos. 10 - 20 (even), Stocks Road;



Applegarth, Stocks Road

AREA 3: The South: The Allotments with Trooper Road, Toms Hill Road and Malting Lane

The allotments and recreation ground lie to the rear of, and are enclosed by, the properties on the three encircling roads of Trooper Road, Toms Hill Road and Malting Lane. This parcel of land rises steadily to the east towards the mature wooded landscape of the common. Accessible via a small lane off Trooper Road and largely hidden from view, it has played a crucial role in defining the topography and layout of plots either facing into, or backing onto this open space.



The Allotments

The buildings occupying these plots are eclectic in design and vary in scale, although none is larger than two storeys; the majority are residential apart from the garage and the Valiant Trooper. There are only a few listed buildings (all in Trooper Road apart from one in Malting Lane), and C20th housing predominates. Earlier buildings tend to be very modest in scale (compared to the buildings in the other two areas).

Map 13: Area 3

- Listed Buildings
- Curtilage Listed
- Locally Listed
- - - Important pedestrian Ways
- Trees - High Amenity Value
- Trees - Medium Amenity Value
- Trees - Low Amenity Value





Cottages on the east side of Trooper Road



Looking north, Trooper Road

Terraces or clusters characterise Trooper Road and the south side of Malting Lane; otherwise larger detached properties back onto the allotment gardens in a U-shape up the base of the scarp slope around the north side of Malting Lane and then to the west and south sides of Toms Hill Road as it arcs round and back down into the village centre.

Off the green, Trooper Road still retains some strong settlement features with narrow plots pushing the buildings out into this pinched northern section of the street. (The chief exceptions are the garage at the top end on the east side and No 12 on the west side with its timber framed gable set back from the main building line). Little evidence remains of the shops that once clustered here except in house names (e.g the Old Bakehouse). Colour-painted, rendered brickwork now characterises the terraced housing on the east side of the road. The sense of enclosure breaks down quickly where it gives way to indifferent post-war houses in the middle section, mostly set back from the road with open plots in front, before temporarily re-establishing itself where the Valiant Trooper and jettied timber-framed building face each other at the elbow of Trooper Road and Newground Road. Behind the Trooper, its ancillary outbuildings back onto the road; beyond, to the east along Newground Lane, clusters of buildings on narrow plots continue the eclectic theme. Where Malting Lane veers off to the east, these merge into larger post-war properties which sit back in their plots; on the south side by contrast, a number of cottages of local interest have brick frontages or gables tight onto the road.



West side of Trooper Road



The house in the foreground replaced a barn to the former jettied house beyond, Trooper Road

Malting Lane then continues as a narrow leafy lane enclosed by mature hedges up the foot of the scarp before bearing sharply northwards to access a row of larger C20th houses; these hug the hillside just below Toms Hill Road but are screened from it by mature hedges and trees.

Toms Hill Road descends sharply into the village; mature vegetation continues to block long views from the road to the west; more cottages once lined the south side – only two clusters now survive. Beechwood Drive cuts into the steep bank on the north side of the road as a cul-de-sac of late C20th houses imaginatively defying the challenging contours of the scarp slope. Further down, the Old Rectory, Rectory Cottage and Galleon Cottage form a distinctive group of buildings in the Arts and Crafts style, elevating the character of this otherwise undistinguished group of C20th buildings towards the foot of Toms Hill Road.

Although the identity of the south area shows less consistency and uniformity when compared to the other two areas, it does represent the gradual later, relatively contained evolution of the village, a bulb of growth extending around the extremities of the allotment/recreation ground which nevertheless remains intact at the heart of the area. Expressions of individuality (use of colour, weatherboarding) where appropriate have enriched the streetscape, but on the whole the overall approach to design has been somewhat indifferent, with haphazard extensions and ill-conceived developments generally diluting the character of the area.

Negative Features:

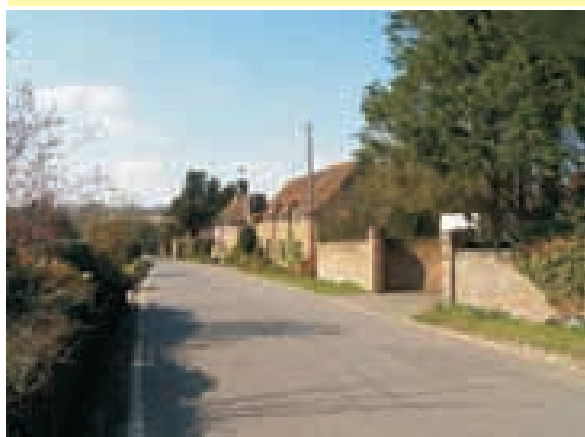
- The Garage and No 7 Trooper Road
- Poor fenestration
- Screening of properties encourages belief that design and use of materials is unimportant
- Some indifferent front boundary treatment
- Outbuilding to rear of The Valiant Trooper requires repair



Malting Lane, looking west



Late C20th house at top of Malting Lane



Rectory and Galleon Cottages, Tom's Hill Road



Entrance to Beechwood Drive

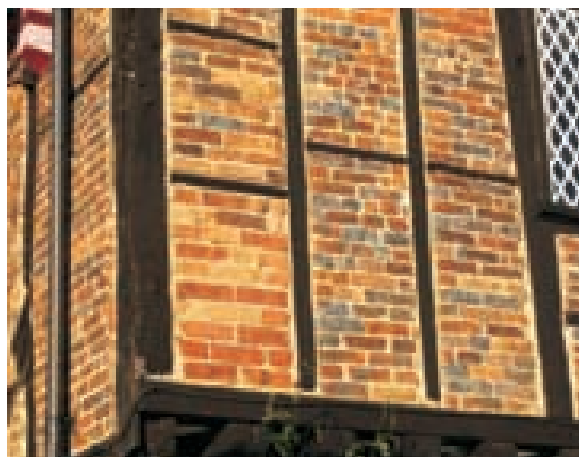
7 The Buildings of the Conservation Area

Architectural Styles and Detailing

No building in Aldbury is larger or more imposing than its oldest; the Parish Church is exceptional in its scale and also extensive use of stone. Otherwise, the village buildings have a vernacular scale (nothing more than two storeys), single storey outbuildings and additions helping to keep the built form low. Attic storeys, where apparent at all, are discrete; very few dormers or roof lights interrupt the plain roofs.

The character of Aldbury conservation area owes much to the use of local materials in the construction of its historic buildings and minor structures such as outhouses, stables and boundary walls. The palette of materials is typical of the Chilterns – timber and clay pre-dominate. Timber frames utilise oak, sometimes elm. Outbuildings are often clad with tarred weatherboarding.

Early bricks are red, or pinkish-red, manufactured since at least the C17th in the neighbouring Ashridge woods; and sometimes used in conjunction with burnt headers.



Brick infill to timber framing



Chantry Cottages, illustrating a variety of locally manufactured brickwork



Church Cottages

Yellow/brown bricks appear in the C19th (the Duke of Bridgewater had these manufactured at his brickworks in Slapton, Bucks.), as do some non-local purple bricks. Red bricks often continue to be used as dressings. Whatever the brick or bond, chalky white, gritty lime mortars are common and only start to be displaced by cement/sand in the C20th. In common with the north Chilterns, flint is used sparingly; it appears occasionally in principal buildings (e.g. rear of Greyhound), sometimes in outbuildings (e.g rear of the Old Rectory rear of Valiant Trooper), and the Baptist Chapel is said to retain flint and brick footings of the barn that previously stood on this site, but mostly it is employed randomly and unknapped in boundary walls.

Clay peg-tile roofs predominate with gable ends and plain third round ridges; occasionally banding is used by introducing scalloped tiles. Bargeboards and fascias, where they appear at all, tend to be restrained; rafter ends are often left exposed. Slates, introduced from c.1800, occupy flatter pitches and the eaves of some framed and brick buildings show signs of being raised to take them (e.g the cottages adjacent to the Greyhound). Thatch was once more common on lower status buildings; only one example (the Almshouses) survives.

Medieval to c.1650

All early buildings in Aldbury (except the parish Church) are timber-framed. Where gable ends or cross-wings face the road (10-12, Trooper Road, 31-35, Stocks Road and 'Timbers') the structures tend to be set back in their plots; jetties on the other hand thrust out into the road. Close-studding to parts of the Old Manor House contrast to the large panel framing characteristic of most timber buildings such as Town Farm. Brick has replaced daub as the most common infill material. Some brickwork has subsequently been painted, mostly white and this itself may cover earlier limewash. Buildings with expressed frames have clay tile roofs; a few may once have been thatched. Brick chimneys are prominently displayed; end stacks have tiled offsets. Windows are small, often of two-lights and of painted timber; some retain their wrought iron opening casements and original leaded lights. Occasionally sliding sashes - vertical or



Large slates used on outbuilding, Barrack Row



Thatched roof, the Almshouses

horizontal (also known as Yorkshire sashes) - and shutters have been introduced. Some larger timber bay windows, usually denoting former shop fronts, face the street.



Jettied timber-framing, Stocks Road

1650-1750

By the late C17th and early C18th brick-built houses using deepish red bricks, sometimes with random burnt headers began to appear eg. Sears Cottage and the Greyhound cottages. Small window openings, usually with simple segmental or cambered arched openings, are picked out in different coloured bricks and are filled with timber casements, usually two-light but occasionally with three-lights. Sash windows are uncommon.



No 25 (Sears Cottage), Trooper Road

1750-1800

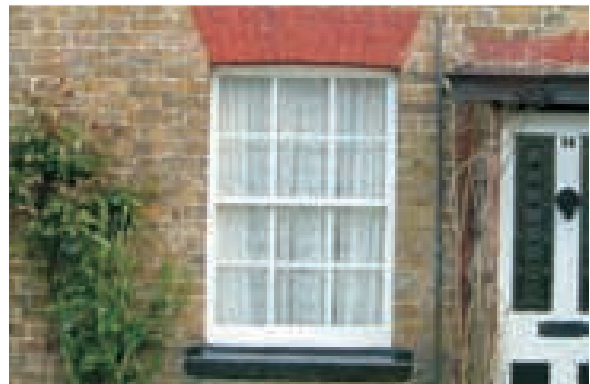
In the latter half of the C18th and the early C19th, the speculative terraces being built by village craftsmen may have used inferior materials – the brickwork has tended to be re-painted or rendered at a later date. Otherwise there are few detached, late Georgian buildings in the village – the modestly proportioned Old Post Cottage is an exception.



Old Post Cottage, Stocks Road

1800-1850

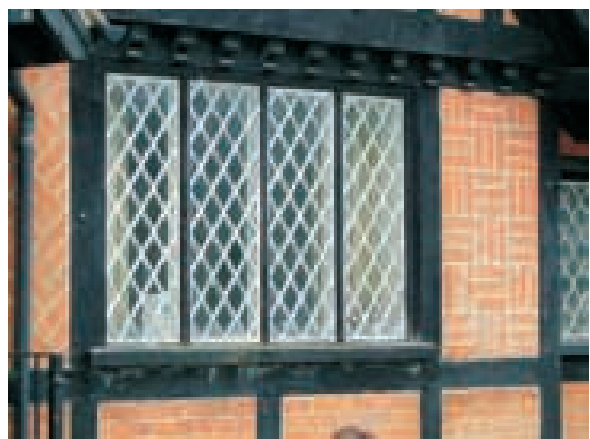
The first half of the C19th witnesses the influence of the Bridgewater estate on the village; new materials such as the yellow/brown bricks and slates are imported, and the scale of some of the buildings increases – Church Farm is typical of large estate farmhouses with its double-depth plan, and Barrack Row of an extended row of workers housing. A number of buildings show signs of re-building and extension. More generally, 12-paned timber sashes become more common, even gracing some of the terraced housing.



Traditional timber vertical sliding sash, 6 over 6 panes with slender glazing bars

1850-1900

More terraced housing with exposed brickwork appears, but also some taller cottages – some with patterned tiled roofs. Cast lattice paned windows are introduced into a number of buildings (especially the school and Memorial Hall, but also at the Old Manor House and No 1, Chantry Cottages). There are no examples of sizeable Late Victorian houses in the village.



Cast iron diamond lattice paned windows

1900-Present

Brick continues to be used as the main walling material, although more recently tile-hung elevations have become increasingly common (a trend which should be resisted as in some cases it has been used to conceal timber-frames; it is a style more characteristic of south-eastern England than the Chilterns.) A solid example of a double-fronted Edwardian detached house can be seen in Stocks Road (1906), while the Arts and Crafts group in Toms Hill Road are nice examples of their type. But on the whole, houses of this period do not draw on traditional materials; indifferent semi-detached houses in Trooper Road and on the west side of Malting Lane are typical examples; a number are roughcast rendered and have machine-made tiles on their roofs. Increasingly, large, detached houses with eclectic plan forms and styles have become the norm. Beechwood Drive exhibits some more adventurous housing adapted to the scarp slope, but none of the C20th housing in Aldbury is outstanding. At the same time, the existing housing stock has been subject to pressures to modernise and extend.

Boundaries

The buildings in Aldbury are generally set forward and abut the road, thus having minimal front gardens. This building pattern is particularly apparent along Stocks Road and also the north end of Trooper Road.

Where they are used at all, the boundary treatments in Aldbury commonly reflect the rural surroundings; mature hedges and vegetation create soft boundaries and are often combined with low level picket fencing. Hedgerows predominate in Area 3 and invest plots with a greater sense of privacy.

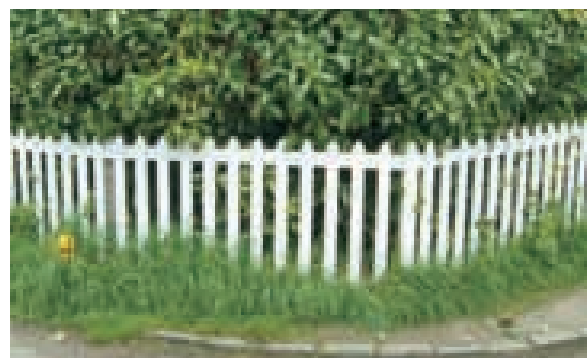
Some brick and flint walling is encountered; otherwise traditional low brick walls are used, mainly with rounded capping bricks. In the C20th, less appropriate materials such as imported rustic or reconstituted stone has appeared.



Tile-hanging to gable



Absence of boundary treatments







Simple white picket fencing

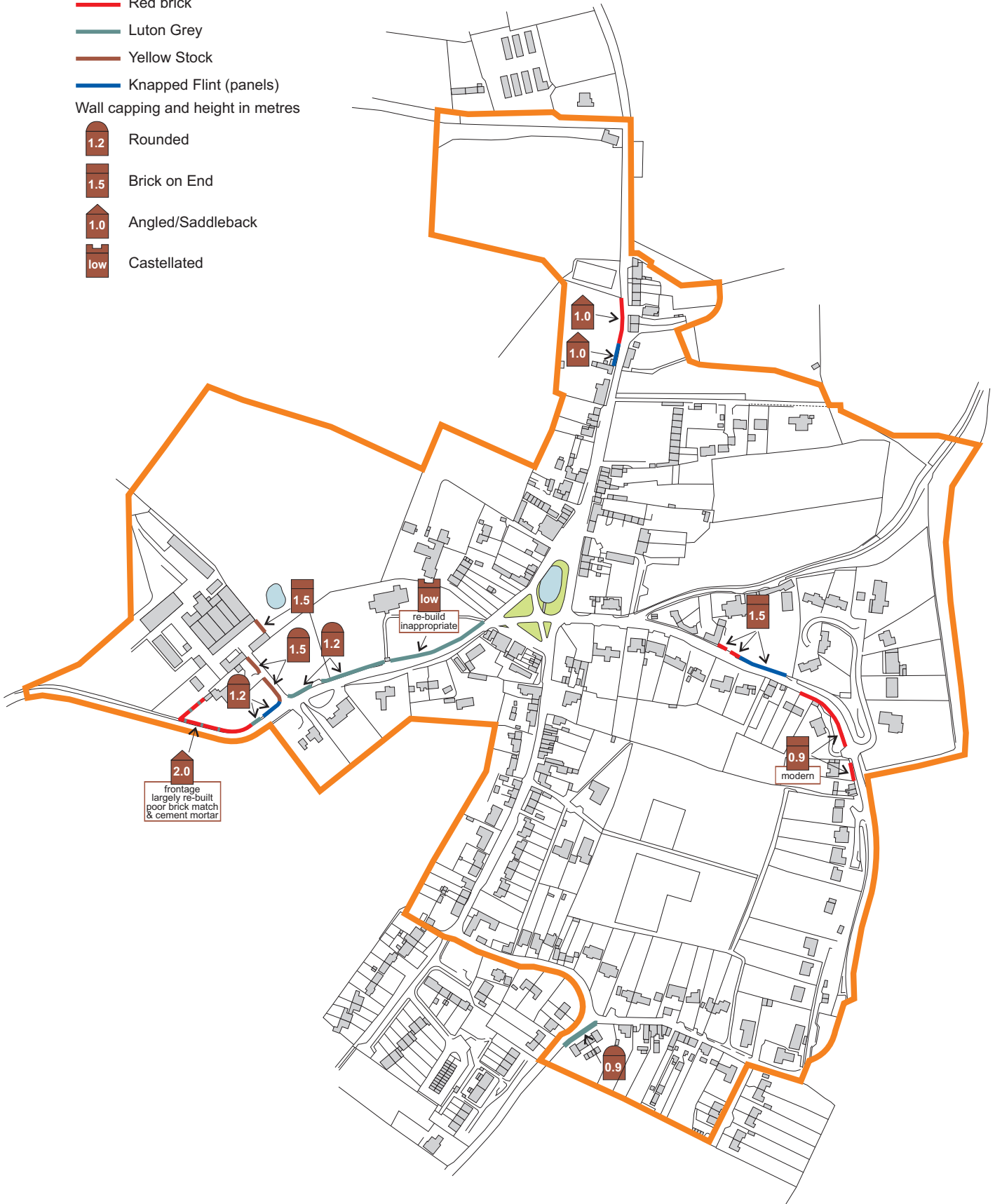
Map 14: Boundary Walls

Wall construction

- Red brick
- Luton Grey
- Yellow Stock
- Knapped Flint (panels)

Wall capping and height in metres

-  1.2 Rounded
-  1.5 Brick on End
-  1.0 Angled/Saddleback
-  low Castellated



Listed Buildings

A listed building is one that is included on the Government's Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest. These buildings are protected by law and consent is required from Dacorum Borough Council before any works of alteration, extension or demolition can be carried out. The listed buildings are marked on the Village Appraisal map. (See Appendix 2)

Locally Listed Buildings

These are buildings which have been identified by Dacorum Borough Council as being individually of special architectural or historic interest but falling just 'beneath the line' for inclusion within the statutory list. They make a positive contribution to the special interest of the conservation area.

Government guidance in PPG15 'Planning and the historic environment' advises that a general presumption exists in favour of retaining those buildings which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area (paragraph 4.27 PPG15).

In Aldbury, there are a large number of such buildings. (See Appendix 3).

Exclusion from these lists does not mean that a building is not of significant architectural or historic interest – it is highly likely that early fabric lies concealed behind later alterations. Always contact Dacorum Borough Council for advice.



Mid C19th Well house and communal bakehouse, listed Grade II



Barrack Row, an example of locally listed buildings

8 Negative Features and Issues

Part of the charm and cohesiveness of Aldbury's Conservation Area is that there are few visual detractors. However, the following do apply:

Loss of Permeability

The spaces between buildings make an important contribution to the spacious, soft character of the area. The insertion of new houses into areas of side garden and the extension of existing buildings threaten to impede views and to harm one of the key characteristics of the area.

Negative Buildings

To the fringes of Aldbury there is some poor C20th housing on the village outskirts which spoils the setting from the west. The garage and No. 7 detract from the tight roadside settlement pattern at the north end of Trooper Road.

Inappropriate Alterations to Buildings

Over-investment in properties has been far more damaging in Aldbury in recent years than neglect. Extensions to properties can damage historic fabric; the openness of the village's topography means that extensions and conservatories cannot be 'lost' by tucking them out of sight at the rear of a building.

Domestic buildings are also suffering from an incremental loss of architectural detailing. Traditional materials and details are being eroded by the use of inappropriate materials (plastic for windows, doors, fascias and rainwater goods; concrete and cement for blockwork, roofing materials, renders, re-pointing etc.). Roofscapes are sprouting aerials, satellite dishes and rooflights. Walls are being obscured by meter boxes, electrical wiring and extract flues. Accretions of such seemingly minor additions can seriously erode the character of the conservation area.



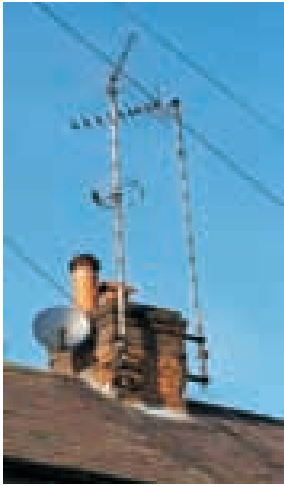
Space between buildings is important - here maintaining a view to the wooded scarp in the distance



Garage and No. 7, Trooper Road



Inappropriate plastic windows being installed in an Aldbury cottage



Satellite dishes interrupt the simple roofscapes



Rooflights visibly interfere with roofscapes



Damage caused by external wiring, extract units and lighting



Meter boxes should be handled sensitively: exposed plastic boxes can be concealed in more appropriate timber enclosures

Intrusive Traffic

The centre of Aldbury is subject to heavy traffic and parking congestion. There is no easy remedy to this situation. Arguably, cars have long

been part of the character of the area, but they can undermine the perceived safety of pedestrians and detract from the environmental quality and attractiveness of the area. On the other hand, the presence of the car park slows traffic on Stocks Road, funnels traffic to 'walking pace' outside the Greyhound and provides a 'refuge' for those crossing from the east side of Stocks Road to the west. There will always be a demand for resident and visitor parking in the centre of the village and this 'ease of access' helps the village economy to thrive.



Cars in the centre of Aldbury

Large traffic signs in parts of the village contrast to the sensible scale and appropriate character of the fingerpost signage in the centre of the village.



Signage clutter

Inappropriate Landscaping and Boundary Treatment

Some traditional front boundaries – for example to the front of Barrack Row, are in danger of being lost to hard standings for cars. The open, ‘soft’ nature of the character area is compromised through gated drives, lighting and inappropriate pavements.

The low castellated brick wall is inappropriate and would benefit from being rebuilt in local brick or brick and flint.

Replacement of hedges should replicate historic features, and should consist of appropriate, locally native species characteristic of old, surviving hedgerows. These may include hawthorn, blackthorn, field maple, hazel, ash, crab apple, holly, spindle etc.

Specific cases where the introduction of, or the enhancements of existing hedgerows would benefit the conservation area include;

- Planting hedgerows to screen properties on east side of Trooper Road
- Planting up hedgerow at rear of properties on west side of Trooper Road
- Re-establishing ancient hedgerow to front of buildings on south side of Station Road, including replacement of conifer bushes eg. to front boundary of Sker Cottage
- Improving hedgerow density on west and south side of playing fields



Hedging broken through and hard landscaping established to front of Barrack Row



Metal gates, lighting and patterned pavements create a suburban feel

Part 2 Conservation Area Management Proposals

1 Introduction

1.1 Legislative Background

The designation and appraisal of any conservation area is not an end in itself. The purpose of this section is to present proposals to achieve the preservation and enhancement of the conservation area's special character, informed by the appraisal, and to consult the local community about these proposals. The special qualities of the area have been identified as part of the appraisal process in the first section of this document and both sections will be subject to monitoring and reviews on a regular basis.

This guidance draws upon the themes identified in Section 8 of the conservation area appraisal 'Negative features/issues'. The document satisfies the statutory requirement of section 71(1) of the *Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990* namely:

'It shall be the duty of the local planning authority from time to time to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of their area which are conservation areas.'

Section 69 (2) also states:

'It shall be the duty of the local planning authority from time to time to review the past exercise of functions ... and determine whether any further parts of their area should be designated as conservation areas.'

The document reflects Government guidance set out in Planning Policy Guidance 15 '*Planning and the Historic Environment*', English Heritage guidance titled '*Guidance on the management of conservation areas*' (August 2005), Best Practice guidelines, policies within the Dacorum Borough Local Plan and any policies which supersede this in the LDF.

It is recognised that this Conservation Area is not one where large-scale development is likely to occur. It is important that the development control process ensures the preservation of its special character and that opportunities are taken to identify and implement enhancements.

1.2 Designation and Extension

The appraisal has examined the conservation area boundaries and has not identified any adjacent areas which should be considered at this time as an extension of the existing conservation area of Aldbury.

1.3 Statutory Controls

Designation as a conservation area brings a number of specific statutory provisions aimed at assisting the 'preservation and enhancement' of the area. These controls include requiring Conservation Area Consent for the demolition of any unlisted building, fewer permitted development rights for alterations and extensions, restrictions on advertisements, and requiring notice for proposed tree works.

Recommended Action: The Council will seek to ensure that all development within the conservation area seeks to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area in accordance with the Local Plan and other guidance.

1.4 Listed Buildings

Listed buildings are protected by law as set out in the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990*. The listing covers both the inside and outside of the building, and any structure or building within its curtilage which was built before 1947. 'Listed Building Consent' is required from the Council for any works which affect special architectural or historic interest of the listed buildings. There are presently 39 listed buildings within the conservation area, including the telephone kiosk and stocks.

Extensions and alterations to listed buildings should conform with Policy 119 of the Local Plan, and should generally:

- take into account the prevailing forms of development
- complement the form and character of the original building

- be subordinate in bulk and scale to the principal building
- use high quality materials and detailing
- pay particular attention to roof lines, roof shape, eaves detail, verge details and chimneys

Recommended Action: The Council will seek to ensure that all works to listed buildings seek to preserve the building together with its setting and any features of architectural or historic interest which it may possess in accordance with DBC Local Plan policies and other guidance.

1.5 Buildings of Local Architectural or Historic Interest

In addition to the listed buildings, there are many individual and groups of buildings and associated features which are of considerable local interest. These are included on a Local List and the Council will seek to retain these buildings and ensure that new development does not harm the character, appearance or setting of the building. There is a presumption that all such buildings will be retained. Policies 110-121 (inclusive) of DBC Local Plan provide the criteria against which all such proposals for alterations will be assessed. There are currently 42 locally listed buildings (a group or terrace counts as one) within the conservation area.

Recommended Action: The Council will seek to ensure that all Locally Listed Buildings (as identified on the Village Appraisal Map) are protected from inappropriate forms of development or unjustified demolition.

1.6 Erosion of Character and Additional Planning Control

The appraisal identified that the following alterations pose a threat to the special character of the area:

- Loss of timber windows and doors
- Alterations to window/door openings
- Painting of brickwork, application of render and introduction of tile-hanging
- Changes to roofs including
 - Changing materials
 - Changes to pitch and roof form



Introduction of plastic windows and doors, Trooper Road

- Introduction of rooflights and dormers
- Loss of traditional rainwater goods
- Removal of redundant chimney stacks
- Loss of timber fascias and bargeboards

Certain minor works and alterations to unlisted buildings, in use as single family dwellings, can normally be carried out without planning permission from the Council. Development of this kind is called “Permitted Development” and falls into various classes which are listed in the *Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995*. These minor alterations can cumulatively have an adverse effect on the character and appearance of a conservation area. Powers exist for the Council, known as Article 4(2) directions, to withdraw some of these permitted development rights in the interests of preserving and enhancing the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Recommended Action: The Council will seek to consider the need for Article 4(2) directions on a case by case basis, to ensure that the special qualities of unlisted buildings in the Conservation Area are protected.

The Council can also direct grant aid to encourage and assist with the maintenance and protection of traditional detailing.

Recommended Action: The Council will seek to direct grant aid, where appropriate and on a case-by-case basis, as a means of enhancing and encouraging the protection of traditional detailing in the Conservation Area as identified in the character appraisal.

1.7 Advertisements

Within the conservation area, it is important that strict controls are maintained regarding the detailed design of signs to ensure that the character of the area is preserved.

Recommended Action: The Council will seek to ensure that all advertisement proposals respect the character and appearance of the conservation area, in terms of siting, numbers, colours, materials and form of illumination.

1.8 Trees and Hedges

Within conservation areas, anyone intending lopping or felling a tree greater than 100mm. diameter at 1.5 metres above the ground must give the Council six weeks written notice before starting the work. This provides the Council with an opportunity of assessing the tree to see if it makes a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area, in which case a Tree Preservation Order may be served. A hedge may only be removed if it is within or forms the boundary of a garden and is not protected by a condition of planning permission. Most other hedges are protected by the Hedgerows Regulations 1997 and formal notice must be given to us in writing. DBC then has 6 weeks from receiving the notice to prevent the work, if this is considered necessary, by serving a Hedgerow retention notice.

Recommended Action: The Council will seek to consider the use of Tree Preservation Orders, in appropriate circumstances, where a tree has significant amenity value and is considered to be potentially under threat. This will include trees both within and outside the area where these contribute to the setting of the area or views identified in the appraisal. The Council will seek to consider tree planting as part of wider public realm improvements and enhancement schemes.

1.9 Setting and Views

The setting of the conservation area is very important and development which impacts in a detrimental way upon the immediate setting and



Inappropriate boundary treatment, Station Road

longer views into and from the conservation area will be resisted.

Recommended Action: The Council will seek to ensure that all development respects the important views within, into and from the conservation area. The Council will seek to insure that these remain protected from inappropriate forms of development and that due regard is paid to these views in the formulation of public realm works or enhancement schemes.

1.10 New Development, Redevelopment, Alterations and Extensions

Extensions to existing properties will only be supported where they are of the highest architectural quality, and can be demonstrated to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area. Whilst some improvement or enlargement of existing buildings may therefore be possible, it has already been noted that there are few opportunities for large-scale redevelopment within Aldbury. There is a case for some minor 'stop end' infill at points of the village where the settlement 'runs out' into fields with no sense of completion of the built form. There may occasionally be sites where completely new development could be acceptable so as to provide visual completeness. Areas for improvement include:

- a) The garage site and adjacent building to north end of Trooper Road

- b) Trooper Road – middle section, particularly on east side
- c) Telephone Exchange site in Station Road

And outside the conservation area but affecting its setting and views into and out of it:

- d) Stoneycroft
- e) South-east end of Malting Lane

There are a number of dominant architectural styles and features that contribute to Aldbury's strong identity and character and which should be preserved through a programme of regular maintenance. These elements should be retained and used to influence further development or alterations to existing properties within the conservation area. Aldbury's layout has evolved over time and the 'unplanned' nature of the buildings, yards and ancillary structures provides it with its unique character. If any infill development is ever contemplated it should replicate this special character and not necessarily conform to modern planning guidance regarding privacy distances and the like. The quality of the general environment of Aldbury has been acknowledged by its designation as a conservation area; therefore only good quality schemes that respond positively to their historic setting and incorporate exceptionally high standards of quality and design will be considered acceptable.

Recommended Action: The Council will seek to determine applications with regard to the Council's adopted policies in DBC Local Plan and any policies which supercede this in the LDF.



Telephone Exchange, Station Road

1.11 Boundary Treatments

A defining feature of the Aldbury Conservation Area is the subtle and restrained use of traditional materials for boundary treatments, complementing those areas where defined boundaries are noticeably absent. Details which are not traditional in the area include modern metal railings, timber fencing and rendered concrete blocks. However, the wide unplanned variety of front boundary treatments adds to Aldbury's character, and, rather than being prescriptive, it is more important that materials and detailing found in the locality are used to help fit new development into its context.

Recommended Action: The Council will seek to resist proposals to remove traditional boundary walls or to promote new boundary treatments which fail to respect the form and materials of traditional boundary treatments in the area.

1.12 The Public Realm and Enhancement

The appraisal has identified the absence of pavements and traffic calming measures as a positive characteristic of the village. Although there is no 'traditional' surfacing on the four roads into the village, the present road layout reflects the historic street pattern; this is unlikely to be vulnerable to future change. Streetlighting would be an inappropriate intrusion into this rural settlement. Highway signage and other structures can serve to detract from the quality of the public realm and character of the area and redundant modern features should be removed. Within Aldbury, signage should be kept to a minimum within the heart of the village, particularly retaining the older more historic signs to preserve local distinctiveness. New signs should be in the same style as existing; modern signs or symbols should be avoided.

Recommended Action: The Council will seek to work with their partners at Hertfordshire County Council to ensure that any historic features are retained, or that any new highway works will bring a positive improvement to the conservation area. All works should accord with the spirit of English Heritage's guidance.

The appraisal has identified the permeable network of paths as an important element of the streetscape in the conservation area. There is a strong presumption in favour of preserving their surfaces, and the vegetation and boundary materials that form their borders; they are deliberately understated and should remain uncluttered by over-fussy fencing or signage.

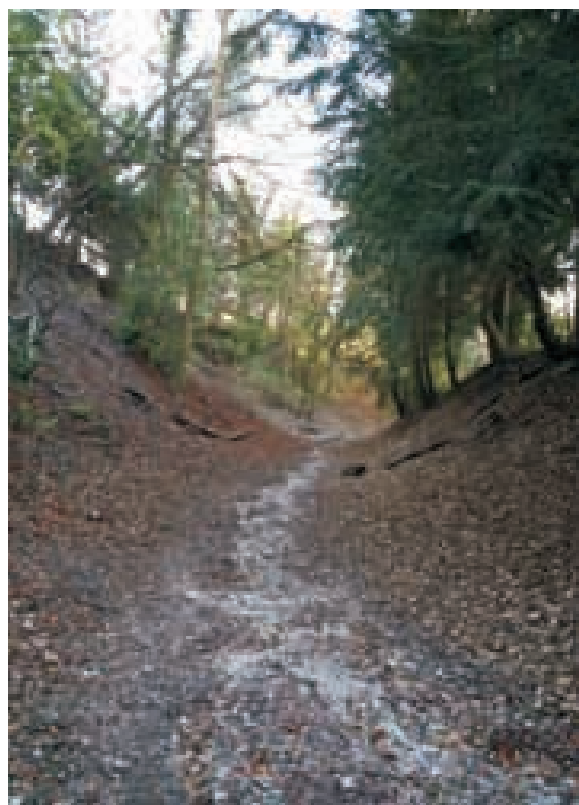
Recommended Action: The Council will seek to work with landowners and partners to ensure that the network of paths is fully protected and enhanced where necessary with appropriate signage.

Three larger public spaces were identified in the appraisal, each of which has streetscape features that contribute to their particular identity;

- a) the village green: stocks and whipping post, the pond, seating, phone box, fingerpost
- b) the Allotments/Recreation Ground
- c) the Playing Fields

Recommended Action: The Council will endeavour to ensure, again in conjunction with the appropriate partners, that the three areas consisting of the Village Green, the Allotments/Recreation Ground and the Playing Fields are appropriately managed and protected

from development. It will explore, where necessary, landscape enhancements with the local community to improve these areas.



Sunken lane leading from Aldbury to Ashridge



The playing fields

2 Monitoring and Review

The following actions are recommended to ensure that this appraisal and management proposals are accepted and acted upon by the local community:

2.1 Public Consultation

The appraisal and management plan has been subject to a four-week period of public consultation from 31st March to 25th April 2008. The draft document could be viewed on Dacorum Borough's website. A formal notice was placed in The Gazette, and articles appeared in Dacorum Digest and Aldbury Outlook. The document has subsequently been amended to incorporate relevant comments and suggestions..

2.2 Conservation Area Advisory Committee

Recommended Action: The Council should seek to establish a CAAC for Aldbury, who will be consulted on applications within the area and will assist with recording and monitoring projects and identifying and where appropriate implementing enhancement opportunities.

2.3 Boundary Review

The appraisal identified that the existing boundary was generally a good reflection of the area of special character. Accordingly no changes are proposed to the designated area.

Recommended Action: The Council will seek to review the boundary of the conservation area in accordance with Best Practice and guidance on the management of the historic environment.

2.4 Buildings at Risk

Generally, the buildings in Aldbury are well maintained and there were no obvious "Building at Risk" at the time of survey (May 2007). The Council will monitor the condition of statutory listed buildings in the conservation area and,

where a listed building is threatened by a lack of maintenance or repair, the Council will use the available statutory powers to force the owner to take action.

The Council also has powers to secure the preservation of unlisted buildings in the conservation area by using Urgent Works Notices in a similar way to listed buildings (Section 54), although in this case, the Secretary of State's permission is required. This is of particular relevance where a building is important for maintaining the character and appearance of the area. The Council may carry out such works as are necessary and recover the costs incurred from the owners.

Recommended Action: The Council will seek to monitor the condition of all listed buildings, report findings and advise action, as necessary. Where the condition of a building gives cause for concern, appropriate steps will be taken to secure the future of the building, including the use of statutory powers. The Council will monitor the condition of other unlisted buildings as resources permit.

2.5 Document Review

This document should be reviewed every five years in the light of the Local Development Framework and emerging government policy. A review should include the following:

- A survey of the conservation area and boundaries;
- An updated 'Heritage Count';
- An assessment of whether the management proposals in this document have been acted upon, including proposed enhancements;
- A Buildings at Risk survey;
- The production of a short report detailing the findings of the survey and proposed actions and amendments

Public consultation on the review findings, any proposed changes and input into the final review.

Further Reading and Sources of Information

Further Reading:

Davis, J., Aldbury People: 1885-1945 (1988)
Davis, J., Aldbury: the Open Village (1987)
Davis, J., A Visitor's Guide to Aldbury (1980)
Doggett, N. Characterising the Rural Built Environment – Chilterns Historic Landscape Characterisation Project (Draft Report) (2006)
Hertfordshire Landscape Strategy, Landscape Character Assessment for Dacorum, Supplementary Planning Guidance (May 2004.)
Moir, J., 'Past premise; future promise: an integrated buildings strategy for the Chilterns' in Solik, M. (ed.) New Perspectives on Chiltern Landscapes. Papers presented at the Chilterns Historic Environment Conference 2003. (2003)
Moir J, 'Flint: Technical Note, Chiltern Building Design Guide, Chiltern Conservation Board (2003)
Moir J, 'Brick: Technical Note, Chiltern Building Design Guide, Chiltern Conservation Board (2005)
Moir J., Roofing Materials Technical Note, Chiltern Buildings Design Guide, Chiltern Conservation Board (2007)

For Further Information regarding all Planning and Conservation Matters:

Dacorum Borough Council
Civic Centre
The Marlowes
Hemel Hempstead HP1 1HH
Tel: 01442 228000
www.dacorum.gov.uk

See also Department for Communities and Local Government

www.communities.gov.uk

including 'A Householder's Planning Guide for the Installation of Antennas, including Satellite Dishes'.

For Further Information relating to Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas:

English Heritage
1, Waterhouse Square,
138-142 Holborn,
London EC1N 2ST
General enquiries: 020 7973 3000
www.english-heritage.org.uk

For Technical Guidance:

The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB)
37 Spital Square London E1 6DY
Tel: 020 7377 1644
www.spab.org.uk

The Georgian Group
6 Fitzroy Square London W1T 5DX
Tel: 087 1750 2936
www.georgiangroup.org.uk

The Victorian Society
1 Priory Gardens
Bedford Park London W4 1TT
Tel: 020 8994 1019
www.victorian-society.org.uk

The Twentieth Century Society
70 Cowcross Street London EC1M 6EJ
Tel: 020 7250 3857
www.c20society.org.uk

Appendix 1 : Listed Buildings in Aldbury Conservation Area

Area 1

Church of St John the Baptist, Station Road. Grade 1.

Nos. 1 & 2, Church Cottages, Station Road. C16th crosswing, C17th taller hall range.

Aldbury School and School House. 1856 for Lord Brownlow. House 1878.

The Stocks and Whipping post. C17th.

Nos. 1,3,5 & 7 (Chantry Cottages), Stocks Road. C18th, renovated c.1856.

The Wellhouse at No.5, Stocks Road. Mid C19th for Brownlow estate.

Area 2

Town Farmhouse, Stocks Road. C16th, enlarged and floored before 1631, and late C17th s. bay.

East Barn, Town Farm, Stocks Road. C18th. Now converted.

Nos. 10 & 12 (Tim Spring's Cottage), Stocks Road. Has C16th, probably former open hall, origins. Timber-framed

No. 40 (Timbers), Stocks Road. Early C16th, and later; restored 1931. Parlour wing to former open hall, remains of wall-painting.

No. 44 (Yew Cottage), Stocks Road. C17th, timber-framed.

Nos. 9 (The Old Manor House) & 13 (Manor Cottage), Stocks Road. c.1500, former open hall. Grade 2*.

No. 17 (Old Post Cottage), Stocks Road. c.1810.

Nos. 31 (Cobwebs), 33 (Folly Cottage), & 35 (Rose Cottage), Stocks Road. C16th former open hall, divided into three.

No. 39 (Lace Cottage), and 41, Stocks Road, including outbuildings. Late medieval cruck-framed house, with late C17th s. bay.

Aldbury Baptist Chapel, Stocks Road. Adjoining rear of 39. 1836. Yellow stocks.

Nos. 47 (Glad's Cottage), 49 and 51, Stocks Road. Formerly four almshouses. Later C17th. Timber-framed and thatched.

No. 53 (Applegarth), Stocks Road. Early/mid C17th, timber-framed with jetty.

Area 3

No. 28, Malting Lane. C17th or earlier. Timber-framed with large projecting stack. Formerly the Old Laundry.

K6 Telephone Kiosk, Trooper Road.

Nos. 10 (Pound Cottage) & 12, Trooper Road. Late C16th, timber-frame.

Nos. 18 & 20, Trooper Road. c.1500 former open hall with jettied s. block and former attached barn, with wall-painting.

No. 25 (Sear's Cottage), Trooper Road. C17th or earlier, C18th brick front. Timber-framed.

The Valiant Trooper, Trooper Road. C16th cruck-framed origins with C18th extensions. Timber-frame and brick.

Nos. 42 & 44, Trooper Road. Possible C16th, formerly unheated, meeting hall or church house, by C17th a farm. Jettied.



No. 10 (Pound Cottage), Trooper Road

Appendix 2: Locally Listed Buildings in Aldbury Conservation Area

Area 1

Church Farmhouse – early C19th.

Farm Buildings, Church Farm – model farm, contemporary with house.

Memorial Hall – 1881.

Village Stores & Post Office – C19th.

No. 1, Trooper Road & Nos. 1 & 2, Tom's Hill Road.

No. 2 Stocks Road

Area 2

Greyhound Public House.

Former stable block and outbuildings to rear of Greyhound.

Nos. 21, 23, 25 & 27, Stocks Road – row of cottages adjacent to the Greyhound.

No. 29, Stocks Road – cottage at rear of Greyhound cottages.

No. 45, Stocks Road – 1906 double-fronted house.

Nos. 46, 48 then Nos. 50, 52, 54, 56 and 58, Stocks Road – terrace of brick cottages with double-fronted house at n. end.

Nos. 22, 24, 26, 28, 30, 32, 34, 36, Barrack Row.

Outbuilding to n. of Barrack Row – unusually large slating.

Nos. 14, 15, 18 and 20, Stocks Road – small brick-built and slated cottages.

Former barn, (Saddlegate) on s. side of entrance to Town Farm.

Former farm buildings on n. side of Town Farm yard – Old Dairy.

Former farm buildings, (Saddlegate) fronting road between Nos. 6 and 8 Stocks Road.

Area 3

Aldbury Peace Memorial Institute, Tom's Hill Road.

Galleons Reach & Galleons Cottage, Tom's Hill Road.

Old Rectory Cottage, Tom's Hill Road.

The Old Rectory, Tom's Hill Road.

Gardener's Cottage and Outbuildings to rear of Old Rectory, Tom's Hill Road.

Nos. 3 & 4 (Frith Cottage), Tom's Hill Road. Cottages built gable-end to road.

Nos. 5 & 6 (Honeysuckle Cottage), Tom's Hill Road. s of Appletree.

Woodlands, Beechwood Drive. 1970's architect-designed.

Nos. 2, 4, 6 & 8, Trooper Road, C19th terrace.

No. 14, Trooper Road – occupies corner plot with telephone kiosk in front.

Nos. 24, 26, 28, Trooper Road – terrace of brick dwellings.

Nos. 30 & 32, Trooper Road – much extended former pair of semi-detached dwellings with deep bracketed eaves.

No. 34, Trooper Road – former pair of semi-detached cottages.

No. 38, & 40, Trooper Road – applied timber-framing.

Nos 9, 11, 13, 15, 17, 19 & 21, Trooper Road.

Nos. 31, 33, 35 & 37, Trooper Road.

Outbuilding to rear of Valiant Trooper.

No. 1 (Tilly's House), Newground Road.

Nos. 6, 7, & 9, Newground Road.

Nos. 11, 13, 15 & 17, Newground Lane – estate cottages on site of former Maltings, including outbuildings at rear.

Nos. 2 and 4, Malting Lane.

Nos. 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, Malting Lane and outbuildings to rear.

Nos. 16, 18, 20, 22, Malting Lane and outbuildings to rear.

No. 24, Malting Lane.



No. 45, Stocks Road

Appendix 3: Historic Environment Record: Herts County Council

There are records relating to the following
(as at May 2007)

ID

- 2625 Earthworks, Aldbury Church, Aldbury
- 2640 Village of Aldbury
- 4240 Stocks and Whipping Post, Aldbury
- 4241 Late Iron Age Burial Group, Aldbury
- 4370 Church of St John the Baptist, Aldbury
- 6304 Dovecote, Galleon Cottage, Aldbury
- 11033 Probable Planned Farm, Church Farm, Aldbury
- 12325 Baptist Chapel, behind 39 Stocks Road, Aldbury
- 12326 Site of barn, 39 Stocks Road, Aldbury
- 12327 Lace Cottage , 39 Stocks Road, Aldbury
- 12728 Applegarth, 53 Stocks Road, Aldbury
- 13108 The Old Laundry, 28 Malting Lane, Aldbury



Applegarth, Stocks Road



Lace Cottage, No. 39, Stocks Road - A cruck-framed house

Aldbury Conservation Area

