Wooburn Green Conservation Area
Character Appraisal and Management Plan
July 2026 V2.4



Contents

1. Introduction 4

1.1 Wooburn Green Conservation Area 4

1.2 What is a Conservation Area 4

1.3 What does Conservation Area designation mean? 4

1.4 Benefits of Conservation Area Designation 5

1.5 Purpose and Scope of the Document 5

1.6 Consultation 5

2. Summary of Special Interest and Character 7

2.1 Overview of Special Interest and Character 7

2.2 Key Elements of Special Interest and Character 7

3. Heritage Assets 11

3.1 The Conservation Area 11

3.2 Listed Buildings 11

3.3 Scheduled Monuments 11

3.4 Other Statutory Designations 11

3.5 Local List 11

3. History and Archaeology 15

4.1 History 15

4.2 Archaeology 15

5. Special Interest and Character 21

5.1 Methodology 21

5.2 Green Spaces and Landscape 21

5.3 Landscape Setting and Views 25

5.4 Spatial Character - Layout, Townscape, Topography 25

5.5 Architecture and Buildings 29

5.6 Historic Features 30

5.8 Materials and Detailing 34

5.9 Features that Detract 38

6. Management Plan: Preservation and Enhancement 41

6.1 Statutory Basis for the Management Plan 41

6.2 Key Principles 41

6.3 Economic Value and Sustainability 41

6.4 Land and Property Economy 42

6.5 Enhancement 42

6.6 Protection 44

6.7 Effective Planning 45

6.8 Support for Owners 45

7. Management Plan: Design Guidelines 46

7.1 Recent Development Analysis 46

7.2 Design Guidelines - Overview 47

7.3 Character of the Conservation Area 47

7.3 Site and Context: 48

7.4 Materials 48

7.4 Extensions and Alterations 49

7.5 Creative and Green Design....49
7.6 Trees and Landscape....50
7.7 Shopfronts and Advertisements....50
7.8 Hard Surfaces....52
7.9 Street Furniture and Infrastructure....52
7.10 Pedestrian Environment....52
7.11 Landscape Setting....52
Boundary Review....53
8.1 Statutory Duty....53
8.2 Proposed Amendments to the Conservation Area....55
8. Frequently Asked Questions....57
9. Information and Sources....58
10. Selected Glossary....59
11. Authorship....60

1. Introduction

1.1 Wooburn Green Conservation Area

The Wooburn Green Conservation Area was designated in 1971 and includes The Green, former grounds of Wooburn House and some of the surrounding area. The Conservation Area is part of Wooburn Parish.

The nearest settlements are larger settlements are Maidenhead and High Wycombe. The M40 runs through part of the Parish (some distance outside of the Conservation Area) and provides links to Oxford and London.

1.2 What is a Conservation Area

Conservation Areas are 'areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance', designated under Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

1.3 What does Conservation Area designation mean?

The designation of a Conservation Area has various implications:

- It introduces control over the demolition of unlisted buildings, similar to those for listed buildings;
- It modifies certain permitted development rights, for example extension size, satellite dishes, chimney removal and boundary treatments;
- It controls the removal of trees;
- It places special statutory duties on decision makers – 'special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area'.

The additional controls, such as demolition, are dealt with through the planning application process.

More detail on the range of permitted development rights is given on the Planning Portal. Buckinghamshire Council also offers initial planning advice (details on the web site).

National policy and guidance on heritage assets, including conservation areas, is contained in Chapter 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework December 2024 (or any later version) and Planning Practice Guidance.

1.4 Benefits of Conservation Area Designation

The historic character of the town and quality of environment are closely related to the area's ability to attract shoppers and visitors, so are factors in the vitality and viability of the town centre. Similarly, quality of place is a factor in attracting people to live, spend recreational time and invest in the area. So, protection of the area's character is very important.

Conservation of historic areas and buildings also delivers more sustainable forms of physical and economic development, by maintaining the embodied energy of buildings and enhancing the town as a mixed use and walkable place.

Quality of environment, including public spaces, is also important to quality of life and health.

1.5 Purpose and Scope of the Document

This document includes a character appraisal for the Wooburn Conservation Area (Chapters 2-5), which seeks to describe the 'special architectural or historic interest' and 'character or appearance' of the Conservation Area.

The document also includes a management plan (Chapters 6-7), which addresses the requirement under Section 71 for local authorities to 'formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of their area which are conservation areas'. This includes design guidelines for development.

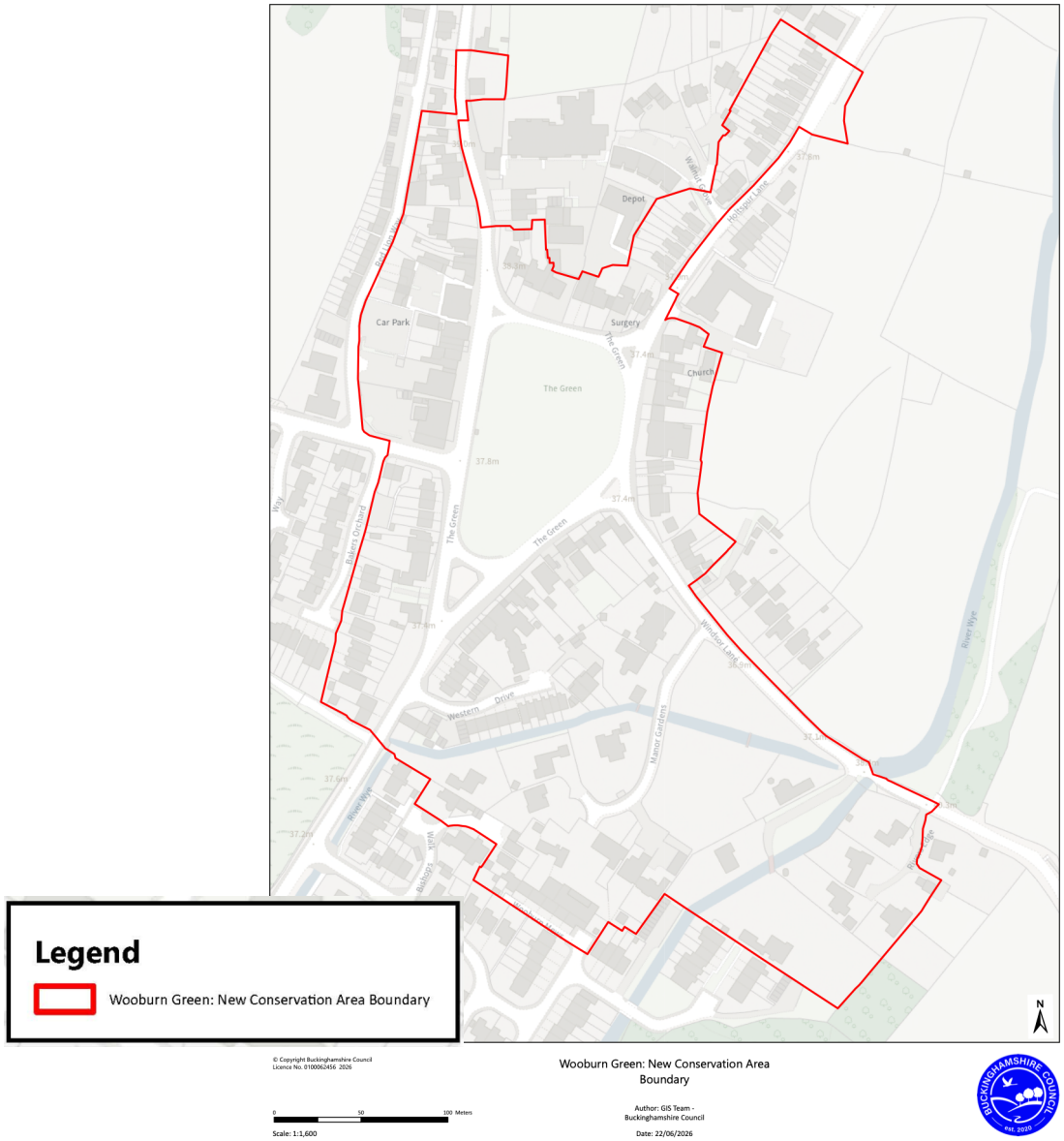
Amendment to the boundary of the Conservation Area is proposed in Chapter 8.

The document is intended to inform planning decisions, planning policy making and other planning and regeneration activities and projects.

The document seeks to describe the special architectural or historic interest and character of the conservation. It deals with some individual buildings, but also townscape, spatial character, landscape, public spaces and other elements. The omission of any building, structure, feature or space does not imply that the element is not significant or does not contribute positively to the special interest or character of the Conservation Area.

1.6 Consultation

This document will be subject to consultation, including meeting the requirements of Section 71 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and consultation case law.



This map shows the proposed Conservation Area boundary. A map showing the current boundary and proposed changes is in Chapter 8.

2. Summary of Special Interest and Character

2.1 Overview of Special Interest and Character

The Green is the focal point of the Wooburn Green Conservation Area. The green space is surrounded by conjoined terraces of buildings, some set back behind shallow courts or gardens. An important part of the character is architectural diversity and contrasts, created by buildings of different ages, some more formal (architect designed) and some more vernacular, low-key and functional in character. Note also the views to the wider valley landscape setting. The other green space of real significance is the surviving parts of the grounds from the Bishops Palace and Wooburn House, which now comprises the grassed area, trees and greenery around the River Wye and the Manor House.

Some buildings, including listed buildings, are more formal and individualistic in character. The special interest and character of the area is based on the diversity and contrasts created by the combination of formal and distinctive architecture and informal vernacular buildings. The conjoined nature of these buildings creates distinctive and varied townscape, with varied roof forms and orientations.

2.2 Key Elements of Special Interest and Character

The following is a summary of the key elements of the 'special architectural or historic interest' and 'character or appearance' of the Wooburn Green Conservation Area:

a. Historic interest as a commercial centre and meeting place, dating back to Saxon times;
b. The valley landscape setting and views of this setting from The Green;
c. The Green as the key green space, dating back to Saxon times;
d. The surviving landscape setting from the demolished Bishops Palace and Wooburn House, comprising grassed areas, some trees and the river and environs;
e. Streets and spaces enclosed and defined by conjoined building frontages, set back behind small front gardens, with lower densities away from the centre;
f. Architectural diversity and contrasts, created by buildings of different ages, some more formal and distinctive and some more vernacular, low-key and functional in character (all equally important to character);
g. Modest or domestic scale of buildings, with a predominant building height of 2-3 storeys;
h. Survival of timber frame buildings, with elements from different centuries, including Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian elements;
i. Boundary treatments, including historic brick walls and hedges;

j. River Wye, its tributaries and the associated bridge structure in Windsor Lane;
k. The varied palette of traditional and historic materials including timber framing with render and brick infill, whitewashed or red brick, plain clay tiles, and timber doors and windows and detailing;
l. A range of architectural detailing, including chimneys, doors and windows, porches, and other details.

More detail on all of these elements of special interest and character is in Chapter 5 of this document.







Buildings and Architecture: The special interest and character of the area is based on the contrasts created the diverse range of buildings and architecture from different centuries. The Green (following page) is the focal point of the Wooburn Green Conservation Area.

Heritage Assets



3. Heritage Assets

3.1 The Conservation Area

Wooburn Green Conservation Area was originally designated in 1971.

There is a duty under Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to consider amendment of the boundary from time to time, and this is addressed in Chapter 8 of this document.

3.2 Listed Buildings

There are 17 listed buildings within the Wooburn Green Conservation Area, all of which are listed Grade II.

The listed buildings are mainly focused around The Green and there is a small grouping based around the Manor House.

3.3 Scheduled Monuments

There are no identified sites of special archaeological interest or Scheduled Monuments within the conservation area.

There is an Archaeological Notification Area covering the whole conservation area, due to its early history and the former Bishop's Palace, Wharton's mansion and grounds.

3.4 Other Statutory Designations

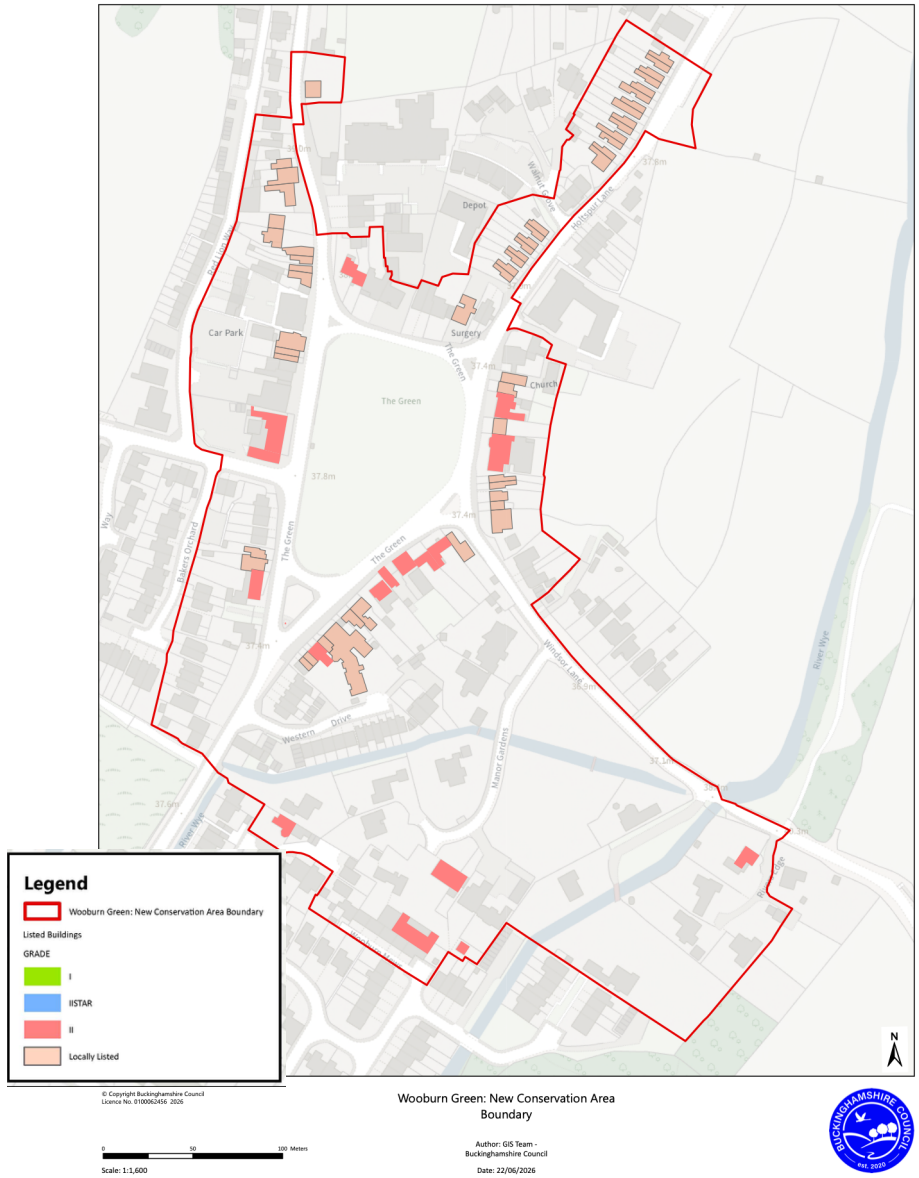
There are some Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) in the Conservation Area. The Conservation Area status means that all mature trees, including any without a TPO, are protected (trees are protected if they have a stem diameter of 75mm at 1.5 meters above the ground).

There are no registered parks or gardens or battlefields.

3.5 Local List

There is a county-wide local heritage list that includes nominations for heritage assets in Wooburn Green. Contenders for inclusion on a local list include the former chapels in Wycombe Lane and Holtspur Lane/The Green.

Local lists have no statutory basis, so inclusion on a local list has limited implications for the importance of a building to the 'special architectural or historic interest' and 'character or appearance' of the Conservation Area. However, the evidence and analysis underpinning a local list may help to inform judgements.



Introduction Summary Heritage Assets History & Archaeology Special Interest & Character Preservation & Enhancement Design Boundary





Listed Buildings: The Manor House (above left), The War Memorial (above right) and Wooburn Club (Next page) are all Grade II listed.

History and Archaeology



3. History and Archaeology

4.1 History

The earliest form of the name 'Wooburn' was 'Waburna' recorded in 1075 and 'Waborne' in 1086. The English Place Name Society suggest the name derives from 'winding stream'. The medieval name for Wooburn Green was 'Bishops Woburne', recorded in 1402.

The manor was owned by Earl (then King) Harold in 1066, and after the Conquest was granted to the Bishop of Lincoln. There was a small agricultural settlement for the manor's tenants, attached to the manor, with surrounding farmland, meadow and woodland. The bishop's manor house was surrounded by a moat, and later records mention a chapel, gardens and fishponds.

Wooburn became a favourite residence of the Bishops of Lincoln in the early 16th century. Ownership of the manor was surrendered by the Bishop in 1547, it then passed through several hands before it was acquired by Sir Francis Goodwin in 1600, and was subsequently inherited by Philip Lord Wharton (a commander of the Parliamentarian army) in 1643.

The Duke of Wharton later spent money on the estate, also giving generously to local causes. The Whartons are known to have redesigned the garden and parkland in the eighteenth century, though this was in turn landscaped in the 19th century.

After Lord Wharton's death, the stable block was converted into a house, the mansion house was built in 1659.

The stable wing was converted in 1756 into a substantial mansion.

The house was used as offices by the War Graves Commission during the second World War. In 1964 the house was demolished and the present Wooburn Park estate was built within the moated former grounds.

In the 19th century the Great Western Railway branch line included Wooburn Green station. The chalk quarry and the 18th and 19th century brickworks on White Pit Lane provided employment that led to the growth of Wooburn Green. The three non-conformist chapels, the working-men's club and the pubs date from this period.

The War Memorial, commemorating the dead of two World Wars and those since, is the location of the November Remembrance service and Parade, with a white cross planted on the green for each of those named on the Memorial.

Recently, two pubs have been converted into houses, and some houses have been converted into shops.

4.2 Archaeology

The area dates back to Saxon times and has clearly been important in early history. Archaeological remains may at some stage be

uncovered, perhaps connected with the Bishop's Palace and the Whartons' mansion and estate.

There have been recent finds of Roman coins within the Conservation Area, which suggest activity in the Roman period, although it is not sufficient to suggest a settlement in the immediate vicinity. Whilst the manor was owned by Earl (then King) Harold in 1066, and after the Conquest was granted to the Bishop of Lincoln, but I don't think that this justifies it being described as 'has clearly been important in early history'. Given the extent of 18th, 19th and 20th century disturbance that has taken place at Manor Park, I would think that archaeological evidence for the Saxon or Medieval settlement is perhaps more likely to survive outside the former manor site.

Although not an archaeological notification area, there is a likelihood of archaeological remains, due to its early history and the former Bishop's Palace, Wharton's mansion and grounds.

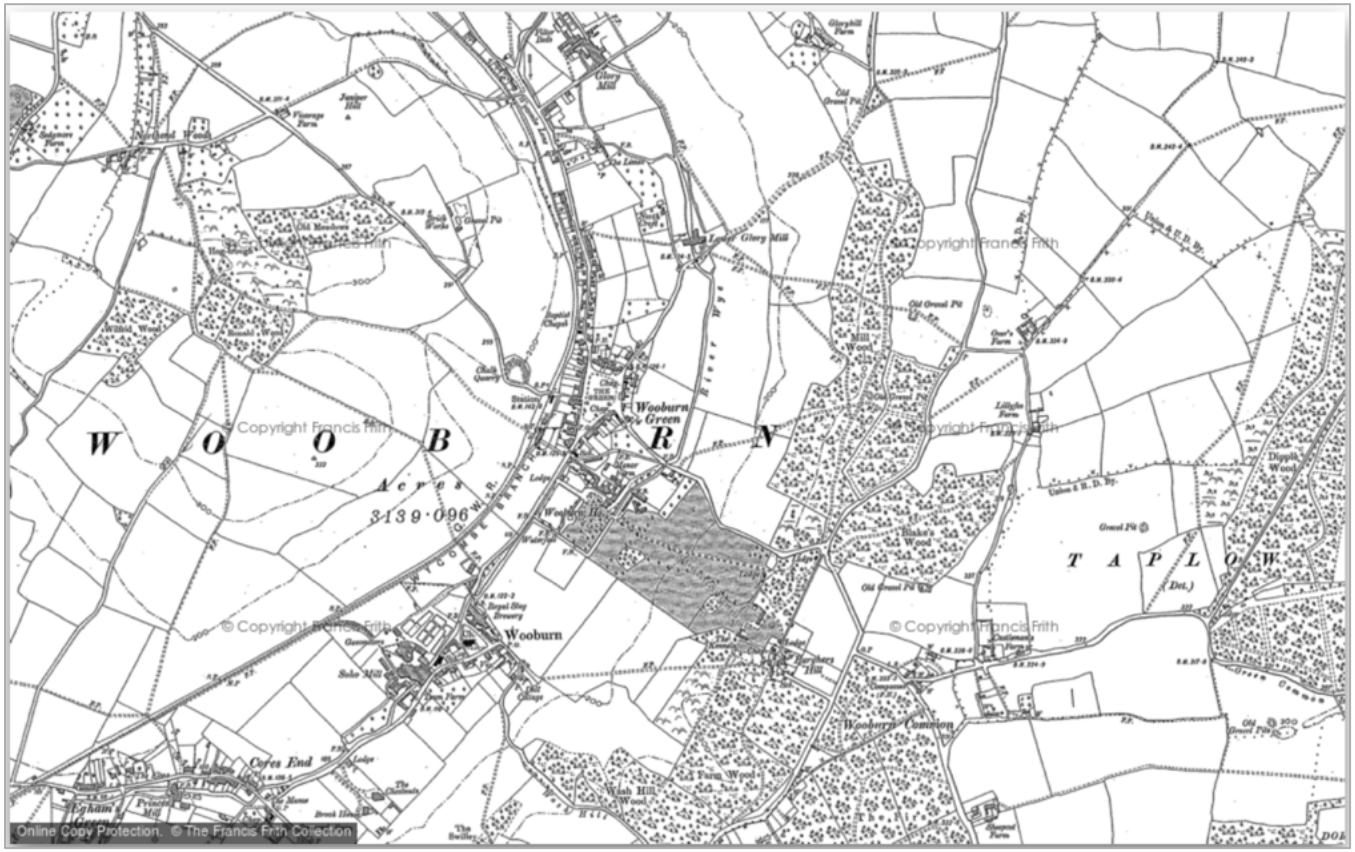


Wooburn House, pictured above, now demolished (PR_240/28/50 Postcard of Wooburn House).



Wooburn Green: OS Six Inch, 1830-1880's
The map shows the central green space, surrounded by built forms. Whilst some of the buildings have since been redeveloped, the layout and townscape character was well established.

Note also the grounds to Wooburn House (pictured on the previous page).



Wooburn Green 1883 first edition 6-inch OS map (surveyed in 1875-6): The map shows The Green surrounded on all sides and the site and grounds of Wooburn House.



Wooburn Green OS Map 1948-1975: The map shows the continuing development of the area in the 20th Century,

Special Interest and Character



5. Special Interest and Character

5.1 Methodology

This chapter sets out the key elements of the Conservation Area's special architectural or historic interest and character.

For a Conservation Area, special architectural or historic interest and character include (but are not limited to) townscape, spatial qualities, streets and spaces, landscapes and the juxtaposition of diverse, and contrasting buildings and architecture from different periods.

References to 'special interest' relate to the 'special architectural or historic interest' of the Conservation Area.

5.2 Green Spaces and Landscape

The Green

The focal point of the Conservation Area is The Green. This comprises a large, grassed area, with mature trees around the edges. The southern tip is separated from the main green by a section of road, and this contains the war memorial, which is listed grade II.

The Green (also the name of the flanking road) is surrounded by buildings and townscape, including a range of retail, community and other uses.

The green space and surrounding 'village' uses have been a social and economic focus for the area for centuries and are fundamentally part of the special architectural and historic interest and character of the Area.

Historic Landscape off Windsor Lane

An historically important landscape area is the surviving parts of the grounds from the Bishops Palace and Wooburn House, which now comprises the grassed area, trees and greenery around the River Wye and the Manor House.

The River Wye (chalk stream) divides into two streams and is an important landscape feature. The course of the river is much modified, to accommodate industry and to manage flooding, with modifications being made as recently as the 1960s.

There is also the orchard fronting on to Windsor Lane. The wall from the former kitchen garden by Windsor Lane survives, but the kitchen garden is lost and now developed as a small housing estate.

Gardens, Trees and Hedges

The shallow front gardens that to many of the properties around The Green and elsewhere are an important part of the Conservation Area's character. Many building frontages around

The Green are set back, often behind gardens, giving a more informal and slightly less urban quality.

Mature trees and hedges throughout the area are fundamentally part of the Area's character. Trees of note include the mature lime pollards which frame the village green.

Manor Gardens has an Area Tree Preservation Order and contains numerous large, mature trees alongside remnants of an old orchard, originally associated with the Manor House.

Trees lining the River Wye are also important, softening the transition between built form and open countryside.

There is native hedgerow planting throughout the area.



Trees: The are contains many mature trees, including around The Green.









Green Spaces and Landscapes: Mature trees, hedges and green spaces are an important part of the character of the special interest and character of the Conservation Area.







River Wye: The River Wye divides and is an important feature within the landscape, running through the surviving parts of the grounds from the now demolished Bishops Palace and Wooburn House. The bridge structure on in Windsor Lane is a surviving structure from Wooburn House.

5.3 Landscape Setting and Views

Wooburn Green is located along the valley of the River Wye. The valley setting is apparent in the clear views to the higher-level hill sides and wooded slopes, which are clearly visible above the rooflines. This creates a dramatic setting for the Conservation Area, especially when viewed from parts of The Green.

5.4 Spatial Character - Layout, Townscape, Topography

The Green

The roads flanking The Green are characterised by buildings, many in conjoined blocks, with frontages set back behind shallow front courts or gardens. This also applies to the housing along Holtspur Lane. The set back building frontages and front garden walls provide enclosure and definition to the central green space and the surrounding roads.

Whilst many properties have been altered or replaced over the centuries, the layout and basic townscape character dates back centuries, so is a fundamental part of the area's special architectural or historic interest and character.

Buildings and terraces are predominantly of domestic scale and between 2-3 storeys in height.

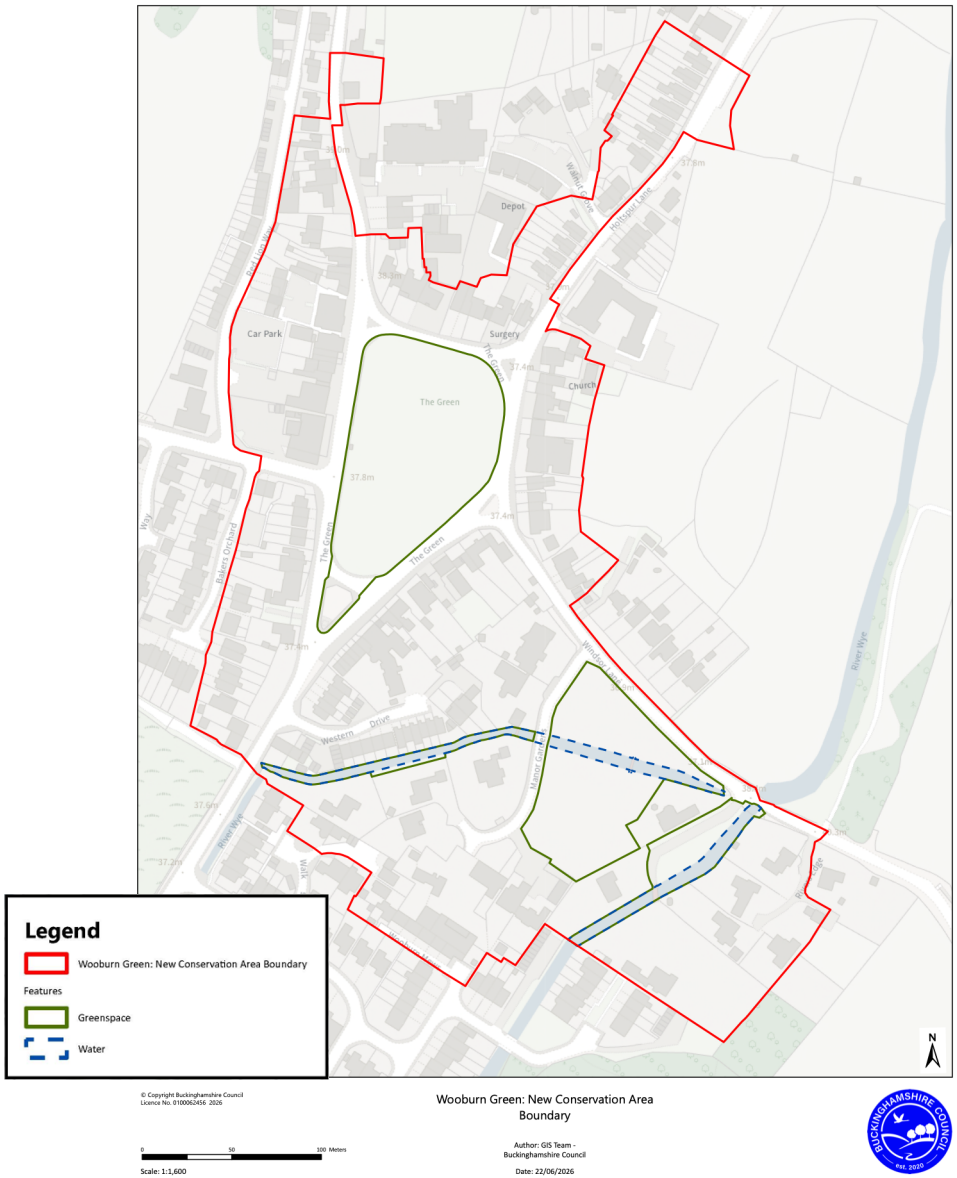
Residential Areas

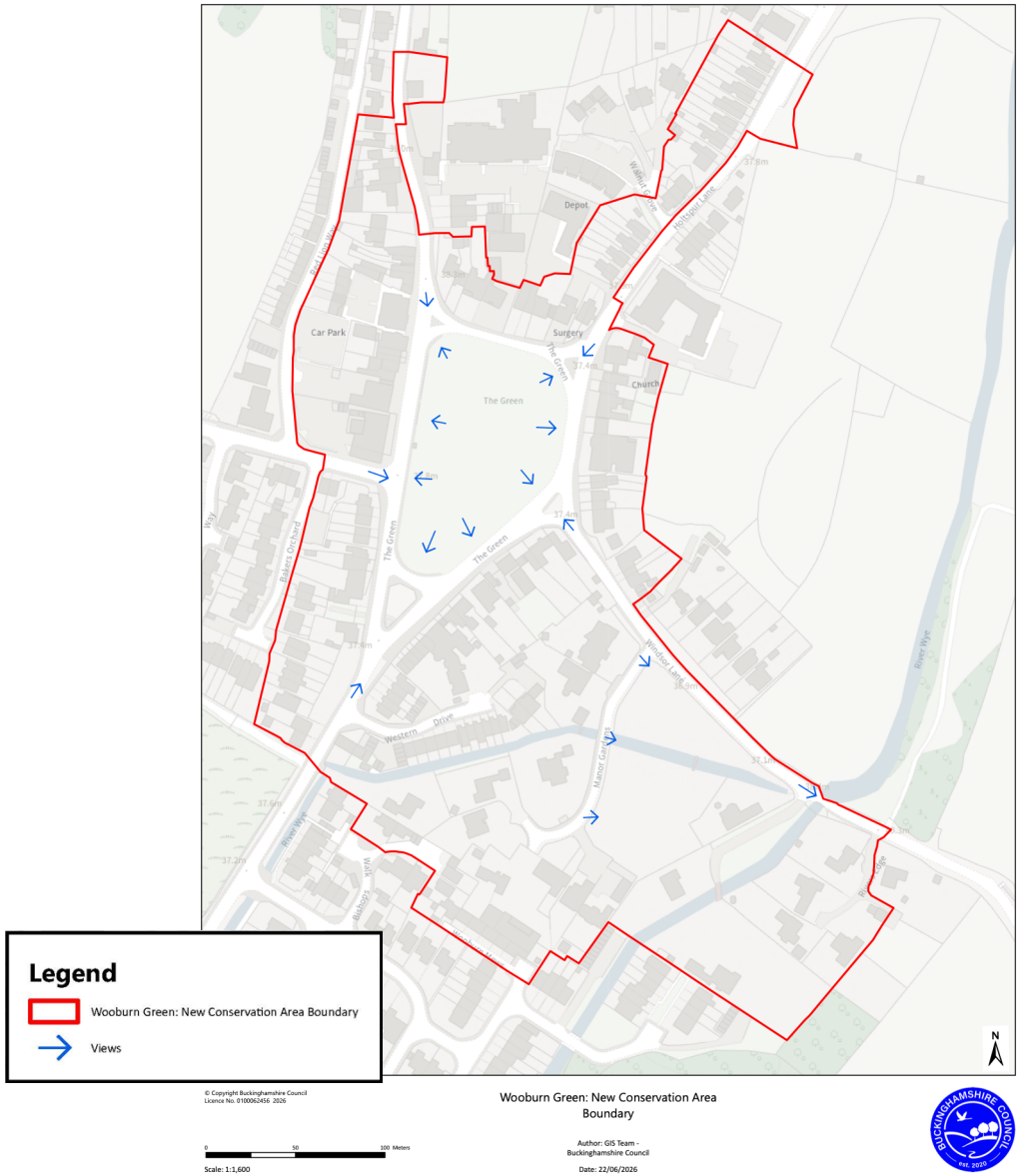
Away from The Green, the character is more residential. Along Windsor Lane, the character becomes semi-rural. Buildings in the residential parts of the Conservation Area are of domestic scale (predominantly 2 storeys in height).

Manor Gardens comprises larger individual buildings set in gardens or landscape (including many more recent houses, which preserve the character, but are inconsequential to the special architectural or historic interest of the Conservation Area).

Topography

Much of the area is fairly flat, but with more varied topography to the southeast part of the area along Windsor Lane, especially apparent in the former kitchen garden.


Legend
Wooburn Green: New Conservation Area Boundary
Features
Greenspace
Water
Depot
Car Park
Surgery
Church
The Green
Western Drive
River Wye
N
© Copyright Buckinghamshire Council
Licence No. 0100062456 2026
Wooburn Green: New Conservation Area Boundary
Author: GIS Team - Buckinghamshire Council
Date: 22/06/2026
Scale: 1:1,600


Legend
Wooburn Green: New Conservation Area Boundary
Views
N
© Copyright Buckinghamshire Council Licence No. 0100062456 2026
Wooburn Green: New Conservation Area Boundary
Author: GIS Team - Buckinghamshire Council
Date: 22/06/2026
Scale: 1:1,600
Depot
Car Park
Surgery
Church
The Green
Western Drive
River Wye
Windsor Lane
Hospital Lane



The Green: The Green is the focal point for the Wooburn Green Conservation Area. The surrounding buildings and terraces are architecturally diverse, with different ages, styles and types of construction, includes formal architecture and vernacular buildings.

Introduction Summary Heritage Assets History & Archaeology Special Interest & Character Preservation & Enhancement Design Boundary

5.5 Architecture and Buildings

Architectural Diversity

The character of the town centre is based on architectural and building diversity, with most buildings being of modest or domestic scale. This includes a diverse range of forms and styles, including in the frontages that surround The Green.

Fundamentally, the character is about the contrasts between different buildings of different ages. Some buildings are more formal (architect designed) and distinctive, such as the chapel buildings and Wooburn Club. Many buildings are vernacular, low-key and functional in character, and some are a mic, like the Red Lion Public House. It is the collective value and contrasts between buildings, formal and vernacular, that are key to the character.

Some buildings stand separately, but many form part of conjoined frontages, often with strong contrasts between adjoining buildings. There is a variety of stylistic influences, with elements of Classical, Gothic, vernacular and other styles.

There is a wide range of low-key vernacular buildings of different ages, often forming part of the conjoined blocks. These are functional in character (not architect designed), but collectively no less important than the more individualistic and formal architecture. They form an essential part of the building and townscape character of the Conservation Area.

Another element of character is varied roof orientations and gables.

Early Buildings

There are several examples of surviving timber framed buildings, usually with later additions (generally listed buildings). The 16th and 17th century buildings are predominantly timber framed and whitewashed over brick or render. Timber framing is exposed in some buildings, and hidden in others.

Many buildings have been altered, remodelled or extended over the centuries and the resulting architectural contrasts are part of the special interest and character of the area. For example, the Red Lion Public House has elements from the 16th, 17th, 18th,19th and 20th Centuries.

Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian

Buildings from Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian periods are generally of load-bearing masonry (brick) construction. Many buildings are more formal than the earlier buildings in their styling, architectural detaining and composition, including use of classical and gothic elements and symmetry.

Earlier timber framed buildings have often been remodelled, extended and altered, sometimes juxtaposing modern elements, such as Georgian sash windows. For example, the Red Lion Public House includes elements from across the centuries. The listed

building descriptions include considerable detail on different periods of construction.

There are two former chapels in Wycombe Lane and Holtspur Lane/The Green. Gloucester House (No. 15 The Green) is a symmetrical building with a 1901 date panel and brick and terracotta detailing.

The 20th Century

The 20th Century inter-war period and post war periods are characterised by fairly low-key brick and tile buildings. As with earlier periods, there was also some alteration or extension of earlier buildings. The development from the 20th Century adds to the architectural diversity of the area and generally reflects the wider character in scale and set-back from the road.

No 43-49 The Green has a simple brick and tile form and includes a distinctive cantilevered, vaulted concrete canopy, though partly obscured from view and in poor condition.

The housing in Western Drive is post-war and does not contribute to the special interest of the Conservation Area. However, the terraced form does reflect the townscape character of the wider Conservation Area.

21st Century

Much of the housing around Windsor Lane and Manor Gardens, including the former kitchen garden to Wooburn House, is relatively recent. The houses are of reasonable quality, but do not contribute to the special interest of the Area. They have a broadly neutral impact on the character of the Conservation Area.

Much recent development imitates rather than innovates, so is of little consequence in terms of special architectural or historic interest, but demonstrates a reasonable standard in terms of detail and finishes, so preserves the character of the Conservation Area.

The recent retirement development in Wycombe Lane has reasonable contemporary detailing, but the height and massing are of a notably bigger scale compared to the surrounding historic properties, so it is visible above the frontages around The Green. The very large dormer windows further emphasise the exaggerated scale. This is something to avoid in future development.

5.6 Historic Features

The following features and structures are of particular note:

- the bridge structures adjacent to the Gatehouse in Windsor Lane;
- various brick and flint rubble walls, including in Windsor Lane;
- Metal railings;
- Surviving kerb stones.

The high walling around the former kitchen garden in Windsor Lane is mainly of 18th century red brick.








Architecture and buildings: There are surviving 16th and 17th century timber framed buildings, often with Georgian, Victorian, Edwardian and later alterations and additions (involving radical remodelling in some instances). There is a variety of roof forms and orientations, including gables, chimneys, stone dressings, porches, and some surviving original timber windows and doors.



Surviving Buildings from Wooburn House: Whilst Wooburn House was demolished, some of the ancillary buildings survive and have group value. These include the Manor House (above left), Studio and Barn (right), all listed grade II.







Alterations over the centuries: Quite a lot of 16th and 17th century timber framed fabric survives. Forge Cottage at 40 The Green (left) has exposed timber structure and a jettied (overhanging) upper floor. The adjoining Red Lion Public House (above right) includes Medieval fabric, with additions and alterations from the 16th, 17th, 18th,19th and 20th Centuries. Note the tall brick chimneys, variety of window styles and different roof types and orientations.

5.8 Materials and Detailing

Materials

There is a wide palette of historic materials used in the area. These include:

- Timber frame construction with render and brick infill.
- Whitewashed brick.
- Red brick, sometimes with contrasting brick and stone detail and dressings.
- Plain clay tiles for most roofing, some with distinctive ridge tiles, and with some slate roofs and a flat roof (54-55 Suffolk House).
- Timber doors, windows, projecting dormers, gables details, barge boards, and other features.

Traditional boundary treatments are a combination of brick walls, brick and rubble walls and hedges.

In The Green and adjoining roads, some stone kerbs (include granite) survive, with varying lengths of stone or lines of stone setts. However, the pavements themselves are asphalt. Within a few properties, stone paved paths survive. No. 22 The Green has a paved front yard.

Windows and Detailing

Many properties, including vernacular buildings, have casement windows of various types and sizes. Georgian remodelling has included the addition of larger sash windows, sometimes creating a mix of non-matching window types.

There is also a range of dormer windows (some of which project beyond the building front elevation).

Most windows are square headed, though there are a few examples with round or pointed arched heads and few shaped window forms.

Original building and architectural features and details are an important part of special interest and character, and incremental loss can erode the character of the Area. These includes:

- Brick chimneys with chimney pots;
- Original timber doors and windows;
- Brick, timber and tile porches;
- Door surrounds;
- Decorative features such as decorative half-timbering, decorative bargeboards, brackets, finials,
- Date, name and other plaques;
- Cast iron rainwater goods.















Windows: There are a range of surviving or historic original timber windows and doors, reflecting the development of the area and of different buildings over the centuries. These include casement and sash windows, and a few round-headed or pointed-headed windows.











Architectural and other features: Other features that contribute to the special architectural or historic interest and character of the Conservation Area include dormers, porches, canopies, chimneys and other architectural detailing.









Walls and Surfaces: Stone walls, kerb stones, paths, stone flags and gardens contribute to the special interest and character.

5.9 Features that Detract

The following is a list of features or issues that detract from the character or appearance of the Conservation Area:

- Some properties have removed the front boundary and hard surfaced the front garden area to create parking;
- Some properties around The Green are fronted by poor quality hard surfaced parking areas;
- There are also other parking areas with visually poor surfacing, including black asphalt;
- Some properties require maintenance and repair (though the level of maintenance in the Area is generally good);
- Poor street furniture, street clutter and road markings;
- Inappropriate shop signs;
- There has been some loss of original timber windows and replacement with plastic windows, including properties around The Green and in Wycombe Lane and Holtspur Lane;
- The war memorial and surrounding space is now surrounded by road on all sides;
- The recent residential development in Wycombe Lane is over dominant due to its height and massing;
- There are a few oversized extensions, some involving loss of garden space.







Harm: Harm to the Area's character includes some street furniture and signage, properties with hard surfaced front gardens, poorly surfaced parking areas, some properties needing repair, loss of original timber windows and doors (and replacement with plastic windows), prominent and unsightly air extraction units and some over dominant development and extensions.

Management Plan



6. Management Plan: Preservation and Enhancement

6.1 Statutory Basis for the Management Plan

Section 71 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a duty on local planning authorities to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas.

Chapters 6 and 7 of this document comprise a Management Plan, which responds to this requirement.

6.2 Key Principles

The key principles underpinning this management plan are:

- Most of the historic properties in the Wooburn Green Conservation Area are in productive use, including housing, commercial and community uses;
- Heritage has cultural, economic, and social values and makes Wooburn Green more attractive as a place to live, work, visit or invest.
- Good conservation is about finding creative solutions to reconciling preservation and enhancement with realising the cultural, economic and social potential of the area.

6.3 Economic Value and Sustainability

Conservation of the historic environment is good for supporting sustainable growth, including the following:

- For the most part, listed buildings and unlisted buildings in the Conservation Area are in productive use, including a range of 'high street' and community uses around The Green, and a variety of residential properties.
- Quality of environment is a factor for many people in deciding to live, spend leisure time of invest in the area.
- The Conservation Area is effectively a walkable neighbourhood with a mix of uses in close proximity (residential, commercial and community facilities) and good pedestrian connectivity and permeability, especially around The Green, so supporting more sustainable live/work patterns.
- The Green is an important shopping centre for local residents and passing traffic on the busy A4094 between Maidenhead and High Wycombe.
- The Green includes essential social, medical and commercial services for local residents.
- The varied nature of the floorspace supports a high proportion of independent businesses.
- The Conservation Area includes the grassed area in The Green, other landscape areas, water features, mature trees, hedges and other features that support wildlife and biodiversity.

- Conservation of historic fabric preserves the embodied energy invested in their materials and construction and avoids landfill and investment of carbon in new materials and construction.
- Terraced and conjoined building forms provide natural insulation to and from adjoining properties, reducing energy use and heating costs.
- Maintenance of historic properties creates more skilled and higher paid job opportunities in the construction sector.
- The central green supports a range of recreational activities, including an annual fair, circus, summer fête and a range of informal activities to support health and well-being.

Recommendation 1: Future planning, regeneration and economic development plans and strategies should recognise and seek to enhance the economic value of heritage and its role in achieving more sustainable forms of development, including in Wooburn Green and other conservation areas.

6.4 Land and Property Economy

House prices in and around the Conservation Area are well above the national average and there are low levels of vacancy in commercial properties, including those around The Green. So there do not appear to be any significant challenges in terms of viability and the vitality of the centre.

The challenges are more related to the affordability of housing. Recent residential development in the area comprises very large, detached houses or relatively expensive retirement apartments.

Expanded residential population is positive in principle in terms of the vitality of the centre, but does depend on new accommodation attracting people who will use the local facilities and also there being accommodation available for those working in local retail and hospitality (including the range of uses around The Green).

Recommendation 2: Future planning policies, including any update to the Neighbourhood Plan, could seek to ensure a balanced range of residential development, including smaller house types to meet local need.

6.5 Enhancement

Public Realm

Features that detract from the character and appearance of the Conservation Area include poor quality surfaces for parking areas, including rough ground or black asphalt.

An integrated approach is encouraged for the public realm, and liaison between the various agencies involved and the Conservation Team is encouraged. This includes coordination of street furniture, seating, ground surfaces, signs, bins, street lighting, information and interpretation boards, cycle and scooter parking, road markings, and planting.

Traditional, durable and permeable materials should be used for paving and public realm work.

Opportunities should be taken to enhance parking, including ground surfaces and landscaping. Where possible, traffic management should seek to relieve traffic congestion and reduce heavy traffic use from sensitive locations, including the Green.

Alterations

Various properties have been altered over the years, including loss of timber windows and doors and historic shopfronts. Reinstatement of missing features would enhance the character of the Conservation and more generally the quality of the built environment.

Ensuring owners are aware of heritage protection creates many benefits, including awareness of works requiring consent and promoting good practice in the maintenance and management of properties.

Maintaining buildings in full productive use helps to ensure that they have a sustainable future and are maintained. This can include 'meanwhile' uses for commercial premises.

Use of conservation skilled and experienced professionals and craft persons is really important, to ensure that repairs and maintenance are properly specified and carried out, so that they enhance the building and do not cause additional problems and associated costs in the future.

Regular inspection, maintenance and repair, using conservation techniques and specifications, save money in the longer-term. Dealing with defects early prevents them from becoming more major and more expensive defects. Conservation standard repairs generally do not require consent, though the Conservation Team can provide advice.

In particular, defects that allow water penetration should be dealt with quickly, to avoid damp and other rapid deterioration. This can include roof and walling defects (such as slipped tiles), and blockages or vegetation growth to rainwater goods.

Regular painting of timber, using appropriate paints also help to avoid deterioration. Care is required with painted walls or plaster, for example in the use of breathable paint. Use of non-breathable paints can actually create damp problems by locking moisture into the wall. Natural brick, stone and other materials should not be painted. For brickwork, repointing using suitable lime mortar is necessary, to allow the wall to 'breath'.

Defective features should be repaired where possible, rather than being replaced, to retain historic fabric as much as possible. Any new elements should be like-for-like in terms of materials, finishes, form, and profiling. This requires careful specification. Inappropriate and poorly finished materials should be avoided, for example replacement of timber features with uPVC (including doors and windows) or use of concrete roof tiles.

For many buildings, their energy performance can be improved, without significant harm to their significance. But care is required

to maintain air movement and circulation, to keep the buildings in good condition and avoid issues like condensation. Upgrades can include carefully designed internal secondary glazing, installation of more energy efficient boilers, installing insulation in lofts and between floors, and correcting window defects, including draft-proofing.

Solar panels are an option where they can be discretely located on rear roof slopes, ensuring that they do not dominate the roofscape, and are carefully installed to be reversable at the end of their life.

Biodiversity enhancements can include installation or reinstatement of hedges and trees in boundaries and gardens, and minimising hard surfaced areas. Tree planting can enhance historic character and also provide shade and support surface water management.

The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings has some useful guidance notes on maintenance:

https://www.spab.org.uk/advice/technical-advice-notes

Recommendation 3: Opportunities should be taken to enhance the appearance of existing parking areas, using high-quality and water permeable surface materials and landscaping.

Recommendation 4: The reinstatement of missing architectural features and historic shopfronts is encouraged, including replacement of uPVC windows with timber windows with historically accurate profiles and glazing bars When planning or listed building consents are required, reinstatement of missing architectural features and historic shopfront details should form part of the scheme.

Recommendation 5: The benefits of ongoing maintenance of properties will be promoted, including awareness of the need to use appropriate materials and techniques.

6.6 Protection

Around the Green, there is a high level of survival of original windows and doors, due partly to many buildings being listed. Nonetheless, replacement of windows in unlisted buildings have had a detrimental impact on special architectural or historic interest and character, including loss of windows in more low-key buildings.

Some front gardens have had the boundary walls removed and have been hard surfaced to create parking. The loss of garden and introduction of hard surfacing opens up the front yards, creates a hard frontage and therefore has a negative impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Should the Council choose to do so, an Article 4 Direction could be made in the future to restrict permitted development rights.

6.7 Effective Planning

The local planning authority has a statutory duty under Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, when considering development proposals affecting a Conservation Area, as follows:

'special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area".

There are also special duties relating to listed buildings (Sections 16 and 66).

In practice, this means ensuring that there is specialist design and heritage advice to inform decisions on planning applications affecting this and other conservation areas. It also means ensuring that decision-makers are aware of the special duties and have a good level of awareness of design and heritage issues.

Where unauthorised works are undertaken, formal enforcement will be considered in line with the public interest.

It should also be noted that undertaking works to listed buildings without listed building consent, where it is required, is a criminal offence, so care should be taken to seek advice and ensure any necessary consents are in place.

6.8 Support for Owners

Ensuring owners are aware of heritage protection creates many benefits, including avoidance of unauthorised works and promoting good practice in the maintenance and management of properties.

The Council's Heritage Team offers a pre-application service. This provides feedback which can help identify issues and suggest creative solutions to enhance the design quality of a scheme and help in obtaining necessary consents. This service can also be used to check the suitability of repair work and whether planning permission or listed building consent is required for proposed alterations or repair. Other Planning Pre-Application services are also available to cover specialisms such as Planning or Environment.

https:// www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/conservation-heritage-and-archaeology/heritage/get-heritage-advice/.

7. Management Plan: Design Guidelines

7.1 Recent Development Analysis

Development from the past decade or two has been limited, and is mainly residential in nature. There are two small groups of housing off Windsor Lane, and a few individual houses, which are reasonably executed, and of domestic scale, but do not add to the special architectural or historic interest of the area. There is a tendency to imitative rather than creative design solutions, though some are well detailed, so fairly convincing.

The largest-scale development is a recent residential development in Wycombe Lane (right). This has some good contemporary detailing, but is over-dominant due to its height and massing. The large dormers and gables further emphasise the slightly exaggerated scale, compared to the domestic scale of other properties in the Conservation Area. Three storeys and a simpler built form would have been a better response to the site's historic context.

Recent residential development in the Conservation Area, including housing, tends to comprise larger and more expensive housing. The lack of smaller housing development raises issues over meeting local need, including for people working in retail and hospitality in the area.





7.2 Design Guidelines - Overview

The local planning authority has a statutory duty under Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 when considering development proposals affecting a Conservation Area:

'special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area".

The following design code and guidance and should be helpful for developers and decision makers in responding to this requirement. The guidance should apply to development in the Conservation Area or affecting its setting.

The guidance could be incorporated or adapted into future planning policy documents, including Local and Neighbourhood Plans.

The aim of the development guidelines and the wider document is to help ensure that development, including new-build, alterations and extension, is based on an understanding of the special architectural or historic interest and character of the area. The intention is not to impose stylistic parody or imitation or to prevent creative or green design. Indeed, the character of the area is based on architectural diversity and contrasts.

7.3 Character of the Conservation Area

Development, including newbuild, extensions and alterations, should preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Wooburn Green Conservation Area, including by responding to the following key elements of special interest and character:

a. **Historic interest as a commercial centre and meeting place, dating back to Saxon times;**
b. **The valley landscape setting and views of this setting from The Green;**
c. **The Green as the key green space, dating back to Saxon times;**
d. **The surviving landscape setting from the demolished Bishops Palace and Wooburn House, comprising grassed areas, some trees and the river and environs;**
e. **Streets and spaces enclosed and defined by conjoined building frontages, set back behind small front gardens, with lower densities away from the centre;**
f. **Architectural diversity and contrasts, created by buildings of different ages, some more formal and distinctive and some more vernacular, low-key and functional in character (all equally important to character);**
g. **Modest or domestic scale of buildings, with a predominant building height of 2-3 storeys;**
h. **Survival of timber frame buildings, with elements from different centuries, including Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian elements;**
i. **Boundary treatments, including historic brick walls and hedges;**

j. **River Wye, its tributaries and the associated bridge structure in Windsor Lane;**
k. **The varied palette of traditional and historic materials including timber framing with render and brick infill, whitewashed or red brick, plain clay tiles, and timber doors and windows and detailing;**
l. **A range of architectural detailing, including chimneys, doors and windows, porches, and other details.**

Development should respond positively and creatively to the elements of character relevant to the site and context, to preserve or enhance the overall character or appearance of the Area.

Design and Access Statements and Heritage Statements provide an opportunity to explain how character has been considered in the design of the scheme.

7.3 Site and Context:

Development, including newbuild, extensions and alterations, should complement the specific site and surrounding context in terms of:

a. **Height, scale and massing;**
b. **Set-back of frontages from the road;**
c. **The spacing between properties;**
d. **Any established pattern of front or rear garden spaces;**
e. **Wider townscape and landscape settings.**

This applies to new build or extensions to existing buildings or infill development. Care is required not to overdevelop sites, for example by building excessively over garden are service yard space or using excessive height. The predominant height of many terraces and conjoined frontages is 2-3 storeys.

7.4 Materials

Development should use high quality and durable materials with a good standard of finish, including:

a. **Traditional materials (new or recycled) to complement the local context: or**
b. **Combining traditional materials with high-quality modern materials, including materials with low embodied energy or materials and construction with superior environmental performance; and**
c. **Avoiding unsustainable, imitation or substitute materials, such as wood-grained plastic.**

The existing built environment uses a wide palette of materials, including timber frame construction with render and brick infill, whitewashed or red brick, stone dressings, plain clay or slate tiles, timber doors and windows.

For new build or extensions, combining traditional and more contemporary and green materials can be an effective way of complementing historic character, whilst also representing the 21st Century.

7.4 Extensions and Alterations

Extensions should be designed to complement the specific building and context, including:

a. **Being subservient in its scale and massing, so that it does not dominate the original building;**
b. **Respecting the historic 'urban grain' and spacing between buildings;**
c. **Minimising the impact on the original building's fabric and detailing;**
d. **Taking opportunities to reinstate original features;**
e. **Using traditional materials to complement the building, or combining traditional materials with very high-quality modern materials;**
f. **Avoiding unsustainable, imitation or substitute materials, such as wood-grained plastic.**

Sometimes, it can be better to use contrasting materials for extensions. For example, for a small single storey extension to a house, a simple and high-quality contemporary glass extension can minimise the impact on the original building and its detailing.

7.5 Creative and Green Design

Creative and green design solutions may be supported where they are designed for the specific site and context and preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.

The character of the Conservation Area is strongly based on architectural quality and diversity, with many contracts. Some buildings and rows of properties have elements from different centuries.

Adding a high-quality 21st century contemporary building, designed for the specific site and context, would respond to this in a more meaningful way than crude historical parody or generic 'anywhere' design.

Crude imitation of distinctive listed buildings can be particularly harmful, as they start to merge with their setting, so should be avoided.

7.6 Trees and Landscape

Development should incorporate soft landscaping where appropriate and preserve or enhance the area's green features, including:

a. **Mature trees and hedgerows, also taking care to ensure that development does not cause harm to roots;**
b. **The Green as the key open space and focus for the Conservation Area;**
c. **The surviving historic landscape that formed part of the grounds of the demolished Bishops Palace and Wooburn House.**

The use of laurel, box and privet species for hedges is appropriate in this conservation area with traditional native hedge species such as thorn, hazel and holly most effective in the eastern and more rural part of the conservation area.

Coniferous hedging is not part of the character and should be avoided.

7.7 Shopfronts and Advertisements

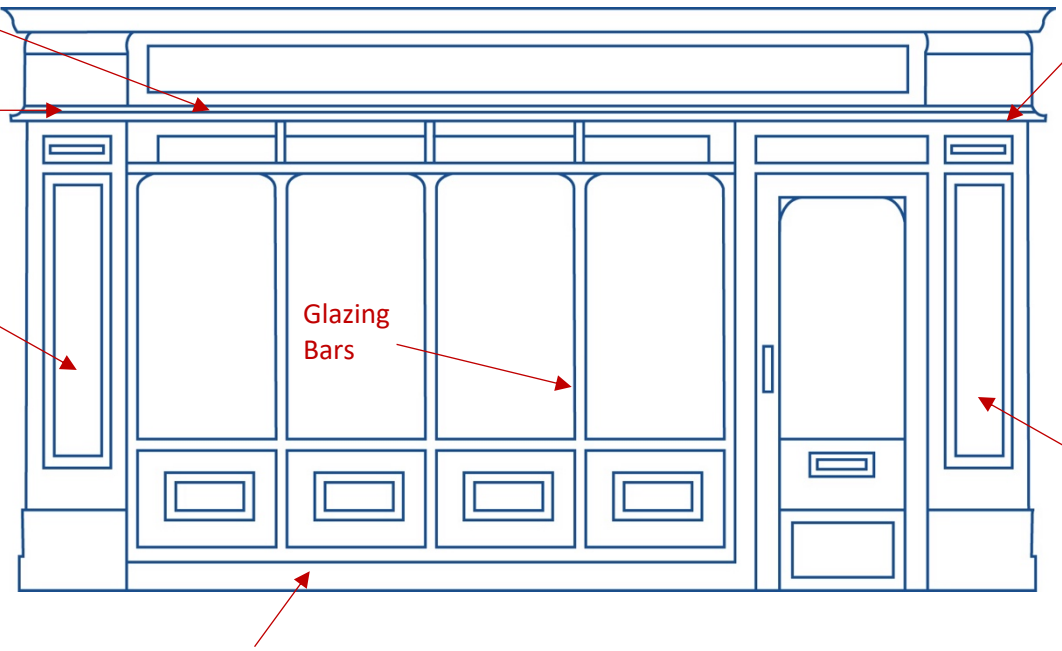
Development to commercial frontages should be designed for the specific buildings and context and:

a. **Retain historic shopfronts or surviving features from historic shopfronts;**
b. **Take opportunities to repair and reinstate historic shopfronts to their original state;**
c. **Complement the individual identity of each shop and building;**
d. **Design and position signs to complement and not overlap shop front facias and features;**
e. **Avoid over-dominant or insensitively positioned fascia or projecting signage.**

The following diagram describes the main features of traditional shopfronts. The preference is for individual lettering, avoid strip lighting, neon or internally illuminated signs. Plastic signage, including backboards, should be avoided.

Shopfronts should complement the building frontage above, for example in the use of traditional materials.

The main elements of a traditional shopfront are the fascia, door, windows, stallriser, pilasters and capitals. The fascia provides space for signage.



Projecting external lighting of a shop fascia sign area generally provides a higher quality effect than internal lighting behind a transparent shop sign.

Paint finishes are more historically authentic than stained finishes.

To create a good standard of detail, timber panelling should be constructional, rather than adding timber beading to a flat surface.

The stallriser should be of timber, metal or masonry construction. Window frames, doors, pilasters and facias should be of timber construction. Use of uPVC in shop fronts is at odds with traditional character of the Conservation Area.

7.8 Hard Surfaces

Hard surfaces within development should be minimised and should use high quality and water permeable materials, with appropriate landscaping.

Black asphalt and concrete should be avoided, due to the negative visual impact. More informal types of surfacing could be used, for example gravel finishes. Historic surfaces include stone setts, though setting these in concrete is non-traditional and makes them water impermeable.

7.9 Street Furniture and Infrastructure

Street furniture and transport infrastructure should be designed to preserve or enhance the area's character, including:

a. **Avoiding street clutter, as far as possible;**
b. **Carefully designing and positioning charging points and other infrastructure;**
c. **Using historic designs for street lighting, or high-quality contemporary designs;**
d. **Taking opportunities to use or reinstate historic ground surface materials, where possible;**
e. **Taking opportunities to reduce traffic impacts, through traffic management well-designed parking.**

Close liaison is encouraged, to reconcile transport needs with complementing the character of the Conservation Area.

7.10 Pedestrian Environment

To maintain the Conservation Area as a sustainable and walkable neighbourhood, development should maintain a safe, convenient and attractive environment for pedestrians, taking opportunities to enhance pedestrian permeability and connectivity.

Wooburn Green was developed historically as a mixed use and walkable place (before cars were introduced). Development should enhance and not harm these intrinsically sustainable characteristics. Local authority highways guidance should be taken into account.

7.11 Landscape Setting

Development should take opportunities to enhance and not cause harm to the extensive views to the surrounding valley landscape.

Particular care is required with development in and around the Conservation Area to consider impacts on the skyline, including the varied views from The Green to the surrounding valley setting.

Boundary Review

8.1 Statutory Duty

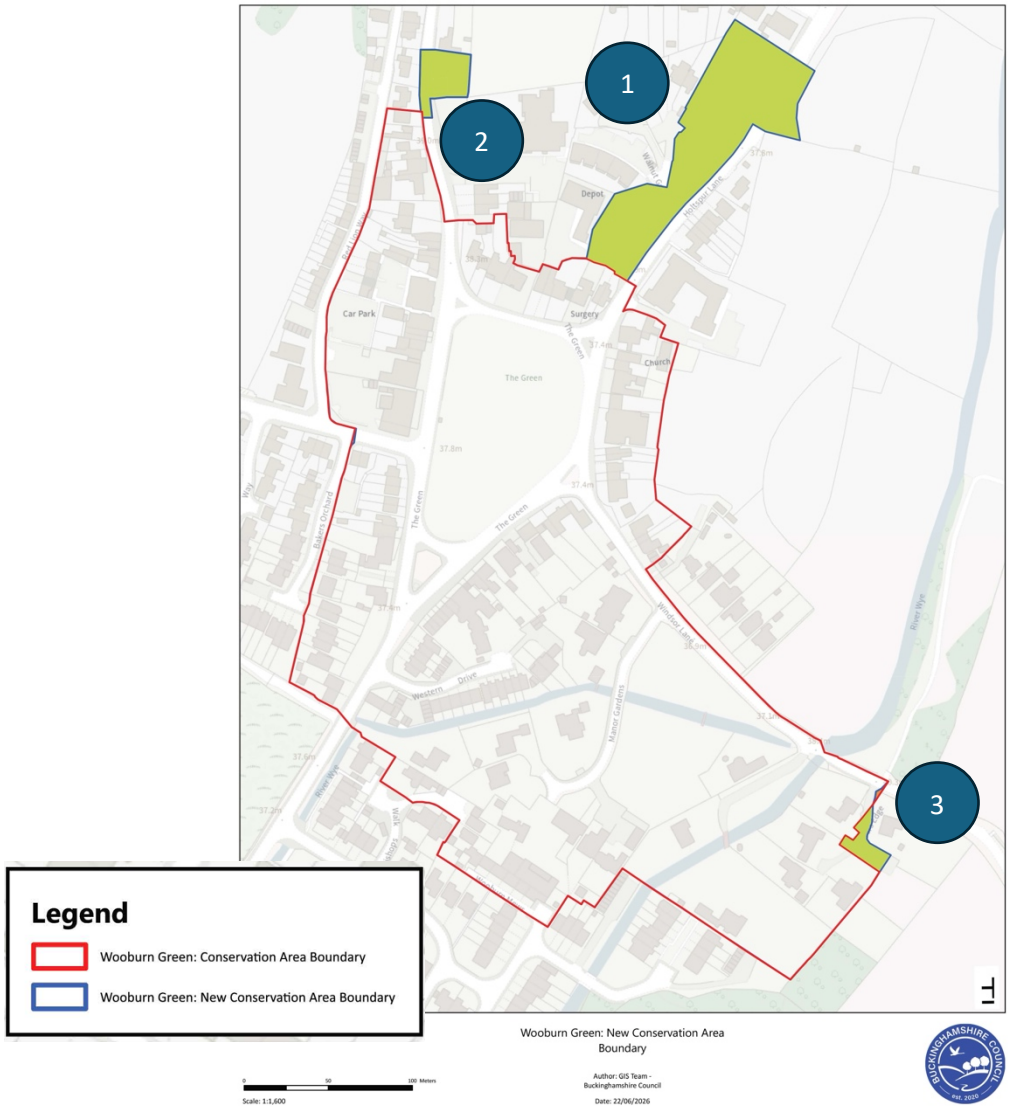
Perceptions of heritage change over time and characteristics which underpin their 'special architectural or historic interest' and 'character' can be enhanced or eroded.

Section 69(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires and enables local authorities to review whether any parts or any further parts of their area should be designated as conservation areas.

Wooburn Green Conservation Area was designated in 1971. Review of the boundaries is overdue.

Following Public Consultation, proposed changes to the boundary will be taken forward for formal designation by Buckinghamshire Council. This section of the Management Plan. provides justification.

This character appraisal and management plan document will be amended and adopted, once the amended boundaries are approved for designation.



Additions in green.
Deletions in orange.

1. Housing in Holtspur Lane;
2. Property in Wycombe Lane;
3. Windsor Lane (minor changes);

8.2 Proposed Amendments to the Conservation Area

For the Wooburn Green Conservation Area, the following proposed changes to the boundary have been identified.

Housing in Holtspur Lane (1)

Housing was built along Holtspur Lane in the early 20th century, in the form of ribbon development.

It is proposed to extend the boundary of the Conservation Area to take in two groups of houses. One is a group of four pairs of semi-detached houses, with plain roof tiles and rendered walls, with full width canopies and bay windows.

The other is a group of six semi-detached properties of red brick and tile construction, with bay windows.

These terraces demonstrate the development and expansion of the neighbourhood in the early 20th Century, and their traditional palette of materials and architectural features add to the 'special architectural or historic interest' of the Conservation Area.

One of the red brick properties has been painted white and many doors and windows are non-original. Nonetheless, the two groups of houses would complement the wider character, based on traditional domestic-scale properties set back behind front gardens.

Property in Wycombe Lane (2)

A free-standing property in Wycombe Lane is of brick and tile construction, with some contrasting brick detail, also with tall chimneys and roughly symmetrical frontage and decorated timber porch to the rear.

The property is altered, with loss of windows, unsympathetic changes to a former shopfront and addition of a canopy.

Nonetheless, there is sufficient survival for the property to add to the 'special architectural or historic interest' of the Conservation Area. The property has surviving features of interest and adds to the architectural diversity of the area.

The property also makes an important townscape contribution as part of the gateway into the centre of Wooburn Green.

Windsor Lane (3)

Development in Windsor Lane has resulted in a boundary anomaly, where the original boundary no longer reflects physical features on the ground. A minor adjustment is proposed, to create a more logical boundary, based on physical boundary features.





Holtspur Lane: Early 20th Century ribbon development in Holtspur Lane (left) adds to the special architectural or historic interest of the area, complementing the traditional building and townscape character.



Wycombe Lane: The single property in Wycombe Lane (above right) has some surviving features and adds to the 'special architectural or historic interest' of the area.

8. Frequently Asked Questions

Does the Conservation Area designation prevent properties from being altered?

The character of the Conservation Area is based on change over the centuries. Conservation Area status does not prevent properties from being changed ad adapted, but does ensure that buildings, extensions and alterations take account of the 'special architectural or historic interest' and 'character or appearance' of the area.

Does Conservation Area designation remove permitted development rights?

There are still permitted development rights in conservation areas, but they can be more restrictive. More information is available here:

https://www.gov.uk/guidance/when-is-permission-required#What-are-permitted-development-rights

Is permission required for maintenance works to properties?

Repairs and like-for-like maintenance works would not normally require planning permission. Advice should be sought if maintenance works involve building alterations.

Does the Conservation Area status protect trees?

Similar protection applies as to Tree Preservation Orders, so the local authority would need to be notified of any proposed works involving trees. Please note, some trees in the area are also subject to Tree Preservation Orders.

Is permission required for works to the interior of a building?

Consent would not normally be required for internal alterations, unless the works involved partial demolition of the building. If a building is listed, then 'listed building consent' may be required for some works, including interior works.

How would I find out if my building is listed?

You can check whether a building is listed here:

https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/

9. Information and Sources

National Planning Policy Framework
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2

Planning Practice Guidance
https://www.gov.uk/guidance/conserving-and-enhancing-the-historic-environment

Conservation Professional Practice Principles 2017, IHBC, Historic Towns and Villages Forum, Civic Voice.
https://ihbc.org.uk/Conservation-Professional-Practice-Principles/

Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management, Historic England
https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/conservation-area-appraisal-designation-management-advice-note-1/

National Design Guide
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-design-guide

Sharing Wycombe's Old Photographs (web site)
https://swop.org.uk

Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (advice)
https://www.spab.org.uk/advice/technical-advice-notes

National Record of the Historic Environment
https://historicengland.org.uk/research/support-and-collaboration/heritage-information-access-simplified/data-transfer-to-historic-environment-records/

The Buildings of England – Buckinghamshire, Pevsner and Williamson, Yale University Press, 2003.

Buckinghamshire's Heritage Portal
https://heritageportal.buckinghamshire.gov.uk

The Victoria County History
https://www.history.ac.uk/research/victoria-county-history

Buckinghamshire Historic Environment Record
https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/conservation-heritage-and-archaeology/archaeology/historic-environment-record/

Buckinghamshire Local Heritage List
https://local-heritage-list.org.uk/buckinghamshire

Buckinghamshire Archives
archives.buckinghamshire.gov.uk

Map Finder National Library of Scotland
https://maps.nls.uk/geo/find/marker/#zoom=5&lat=56.0000&lon=-4.0000&f=1&z=1&marker=56.0,-4.0&from=1449&to=2001

10. Selected Glossary

Planning Terms are defined in the National Planning Policy Framework.

The following is a selected glossary.

Casement Window: A hinged opening window.

Conservation Areas: Areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance, designated under Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Dormer Window: A type of window that projects from the slope of the roof.

Formal (Polite) Architecture: This refers to formally designed architecture, usually using a set of principles associated with a particular style, such as Classical, Gothic or Modern.

Gable: The pointed section of wall at the ends of a pitched roof.

Listed Buildings: Building of special architectural or historic interest, which benefit from additional controls and have different grades (1, II* and II).

Polite Architecture: See Formal Architecture.

Rainwater Goods: Guttering and downpipes.

Rear-of-pavement frontage: Building frontage directly onto the back of the pavement, rather than being set back behind a front court or garden.

Sash Window: A window type with two sliding elements in a frame, often with fine glazing bars.

Spatial Character: Character derived from the combination of layout, townscape and topography and the way they define streets and spaces.

Terrace: A conjoined row of buildings, either developed together in a uniform style, or developed incrementally, with contrasting styles.

Tree Preservation Order: An order made by a local planning authority in England to protect specific trees, groups of trees or woodlands in the interests of amenity.

Vernacular Buildings: Buildings using local and traditional materials, not architect designed.

11. Authorship

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