

# GRIMSBURY CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL



**Consultation Draft**  
September 2006



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# 1 Introduction

This document is an appraisal of the character and appearance of Grimsbury, constructed as a suburb of Banbury in the latter half of the nineteenth century. The area is of interest because of the historic context of the site and the political process that supported its development. It is also of interest because it is representative of the spectrum in working class and artisan housing constructed in the latter half of the nineteenth century.

Freehold land societies came into existence in the 1840s as part of a politically inspired movement, organised by Liberal radicals to effect Parliamentary reform. Following the Reform Act of 1867, the two most important voting qualifications were the ownership of a freehold with a minimum value of 40 shillings, and the occupation of a house worth at least £10 a year. The freehold land societies were initiated and encouraged as

mechanisms by which the supporters of reform could become enfranchised within the existing system, and thereby change the balance of political power, and ultimately the system itself.

The development which most epitomised the ethos of Liberal Banbury was New Grimsbury, originally called Freetown. Early in 1851 an audience of 300 heard James Taylor of Birmingham lecture in Banbury on Freehold Land Societies. Taylor was a disciple of the Unitarian minister George Dawson, and a zealous crusader for working-class self-help. The principle of a freehold land society was that members should subscribe to buy land at wholesale prices, and distribute building plots among themselves at the same price. By creating freeholds, such societies extended the franchise in county constituencies, but Taylor denied that such consequences had a party objective (Trinder,2005).

## 2 Planning policy context

### 2.1 Conservation Area Designation

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (1990 Act) provides legislation for the protection of the nation's heritage of buildings and places of architectural and historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.

Conservation areas were introduced in the Civic Amenities Act of 1967. However, it is the 1990 Act (Section 69) which places a duty upon local planning authorities to identify areas of special architectural or historic interest through an appraisal process and to designate them as conservation areas. Since 1967 some 8,000 conservation areas have been designated in England, including 53 in Cherwell District.

This document is based on a standard recording format derived from advice contained in documents published by English Heritage (2005a). By designating Grimsbury as a conservation area, the special character and appearance can be identified and protected by ensuring that any future development preserves or enhances that identified special character.

This draft appraisal will be the subject of public consultation and thereafter put forward for adoption by the Council to become a material consideration in the determination of planning applications within the conservation area and its setting.

### 2.2 Justification for Conservation Area Designation

The initial development of the area south of the historic settlement of Grimsbury during the latter half of the nineteenth century arose because of the pressing need to house the rapidly

expanding working-class population of Banbury. Land along the old causeway was developed in a speculative manner to provide homes for railway and factory employees ('Railway Terraces'). However the development of land to the north of Middleton Road was fired by the political activism of the time, under the auspices of the Banbury Freehold Land Society, in the cause of working-class self-help. The New Grimsbury freehold estate was not one of the first freehold sites to be developed, but nationally it is one of the earliest estates still standing by virtue of the city locations of other schemes and the social and economic pressures that have led to the redevelopment of other sites.

The nineteenth century saw a massive expansion in the size and population of Banbury precipitated by the trade and industry associated with the canal and railway. Suburbs for the middle and working-classes grew up on all sides of Banbury, including to the east in Grimsbury.

Of all the suburbs of Banbury the New Grimsbury freehold estate stands on its own. Although New Grimsbury shares the Nineteenth Century architecture of the other suburbs of the town, what is special about the development of this area is the vision and political will of the late nineteenth century philanthropic leaders of Banbury society, such as Bernhard Samuelson (industrialist), Timothy Rhodes Cobb (banker), William Potts (newspaper editor) and others, which saw through the creation of a scheme to provide freehold ownership for the working man and thereby extend the political franchise. The resulting appearance of the New Grimsbury freehold estate, with small groups of houses of individual style rather than long runs of terraces, is the result of this novel experiment in household ownership.

### 3 Location and setting

The area of Grimsbury lies east of the River Cherwell and forms the eastern urban fringe of the town of Banbury (Figure 1).

the floodplain of the river Cherwell on Oxford clay within the *Cherwell Valley* landscape character area (Cobham Resource Consultants, 1995).

The area is flanked by the London to Birmingham railway to the west and the M40 motorway to the east.

The historic settlement of Grimsbury (now known as 'Old Grimsbury') lies to the north-east of Banbury. The nineteenth century suburb lies to the south of this historic settlement, on the east side of the bridge over the Cherwell and is accessed by the traditional routes that lead east out of the town of Banbury. The proposed conservation area lies partially within

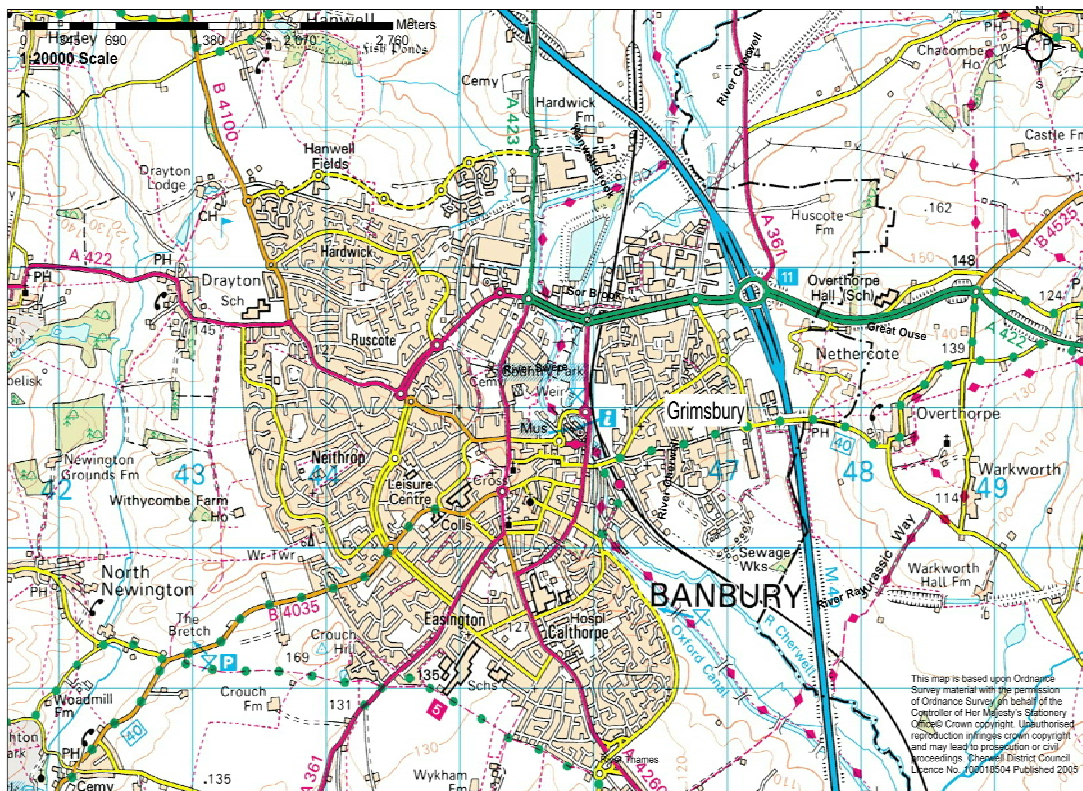


Figure 1 Location of Grimsbury.

## 4 History of the Grimsbury Area

### 4.1 Origins

The origins of an historic settlement at Grimsbury are unknown. The name 'Grimsbury' is of early Saxon type, and is the corruption of the Saxon name for a defended enclosure (*burh*) of a person called 'Grim'. It is possible that the name was derived from a pseudonym for the pagan god 'Woden'. (In the mythology of pagan northern Europe, Woden was a multi-faceted god able to take on many forms and many names – 'Grim' /'Grimner' (the Masked One) - being but one of his guises). This suggests that the settlement dates from the early saxon period and predates the conversion of the area to Christianity which occurred in the mid-seventh century. It is therefore likely that the original settlement was contemporary with that of the village of Banbury (Potts, 1978).

The site of the settlement that is Old Grimsbury was originally focussed on Grimsbury Manor (Figure 2). The

current Manor, built in 1836, is located on the site of the original Manor, at the northern edge of the area that now takes its name.

Throughout the Middle Ages until the mid-eighteenth century the area that comprises Grimsbury together with Nethercote was the centre of Banbury's cheese making trade, a product that was much prized at the time, but of which there is no mention by the nineteenth century (Pugh, 1972).

The road now known as Middleton Road was a turnpike road from Banbury into Northamptonshire and therefore it is likely that there was development on the eastern side of the bridge from the seventeenth century, or earlier. In the early nineteenth century part of the area was known as Waterloo and was a settlement for the poor. (Pugh, 1972). At the junction of Middleton Road and Causeway is the site of a medieval hermitage located in front of the listed Elephant and Castle public house (Figure 3).

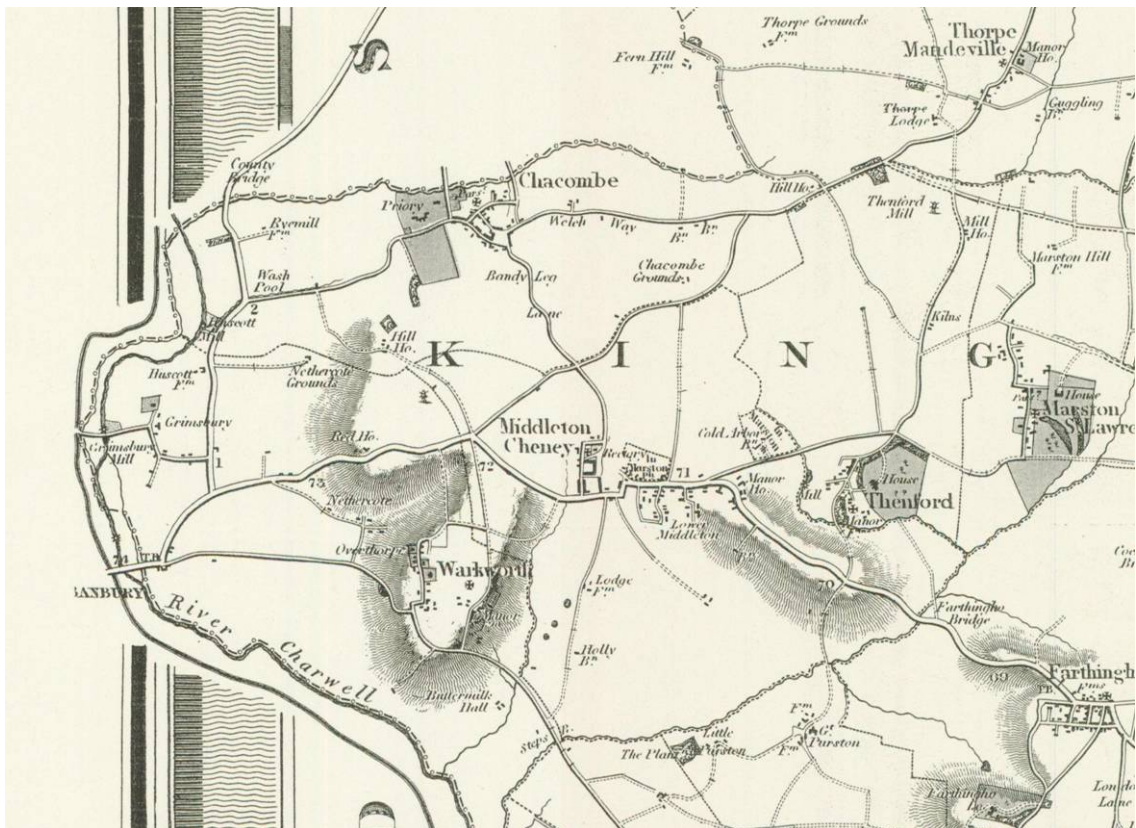


Figure 2 1825 map of Northamptonshire



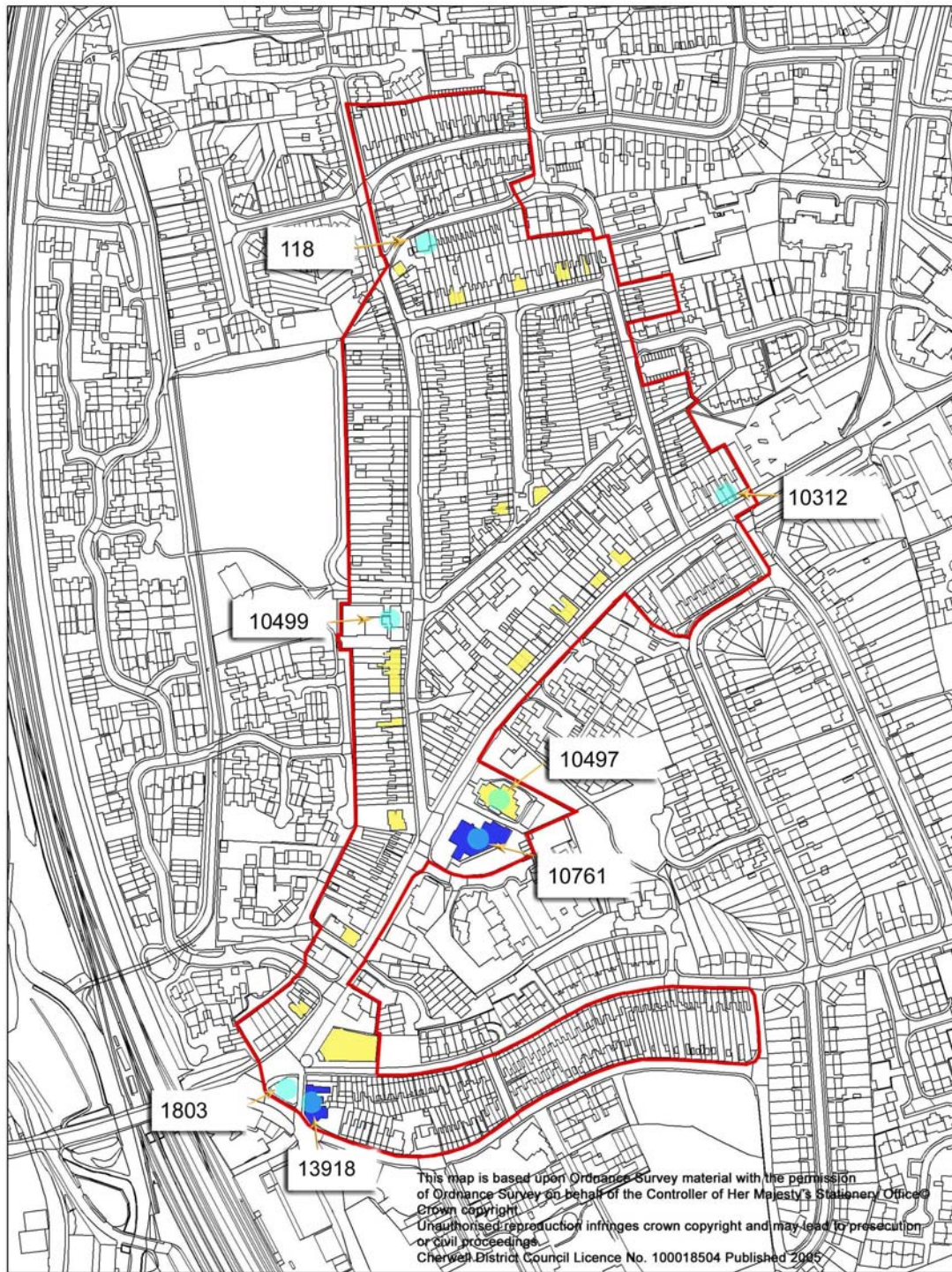


Figure 3 Designation sites in Grimsbury.

Key to archaeological sites identified in Figure 3:

118	Site of the Old Malthouse
1803	Site of medieval Hermitage (first mentioned in 1531, appears on map of 1694, location not certain and now built over)
10312	Site of Toll House
10499	Methodist Chapel (built 1871)
10497	Church of St Leonard
10761	St Leonard's School (built 1860/1) Grade II listed
13918	Elephant and Castle Public House (built late C17th/early C18th) Grade II listed. Possible location of medieval St Leonard's Hospital for Lepers.

During the eighteenth century the meadows on the Northamptonshire side of the Cherwell were used for horse racing. The first recorded horse race took place in 1729. These were popular occasions attended by both the rich and poor classes alike and a temporary wooden bridge was erected over the Cherwell to provide access to the course from the town centre (Herbert, 1971). Tradition was based on occasion rather than accountable organisation and after the 1846 meeting the course was taken over by the Great Western Railway as building land. Race meetings continued spasmodically on other courses but they never became significant social occasions (Trinder, 2005).

#### 4.2 Brief History of the Political Representation of Banbury and local District

A very brief synopsis of the political background of Banbury town is given here to explain the reasons for the success of the Freehold Movement in the nineteenth century. The political representation of the area seems at all times to have been contested, either by

gentry or during the latter half of the nineteenth century by businessmen; and the fact that Banbury was a 'Pocket Borough' (i.e. a borough where one family owned the constituency and the MP was nominated by the owner) seems to have ensured that the feelings there were would run high.

In January 1554 Banbury was granted a royal charter that established the town as a borough to be governed by the aldermen of the town. This granted the borough corporate status and the privilege to elect a member of parliament; which by the eighteenth century was one of the most important functions of the corporation.

From 1554 to 1882 Banbury was one of only 5 boroughs represented by a single member of parliament, whom from the outset was elected from the local gentry. The seventeenth century saw a continuous struggle between the borough's Whigs and Tories, political machinations which continued throughout the eighteenth century. It was the election of 10 December 1832 that marked the end of the influence of local aristocratic families in Banbury politics and from then until the town lost its separate representation, the leading families of Banbury itself were dominant. However, that said, the town's politics were far from peaceful.

Within the area there was strong local support for the Reform Act of 1832. This Act was aimed at the removal of corrupt seats (the so-called 'Rotten' and 'Pocket Boroughs') and to provide the new and growing industrial towns, such as Manchester, Birmingham, Bradford and Leeds, with representation within in the House of Commons. The success of the Reform Movement altered the structure of Banbury society. The elected Reformers had different interests to the heredity gentry and by the mid-1830s these new representatives had altered opportunities within the town by providing leadership in areas of education, as well as providing for charitable and recreational opportunities.

The Reform Act of 1867 granted the vote to every male adult householder living in a borough constituency, as well as male lodgers paying £10 or more per annum for unfurnished rooms. This resulted in an increase in the Banbury vote and gave rise to a keen struggle for the new working-class vote. This was followed by the Redistribution Act of 1885 which saw Banbury become part of the constituency of North Oxfordshire. In 1889 the Borough was extended to include Neithrop and Grimsbury, thus rationalising political and ecclesiastical administrative boundaries, since Grimsbury had been included in the ancient parish of Banbury from its outset, even though located within the boundaries of Northamptonshire.

### 4.3 Freehold Agitation

The national political reforms of the late nineteenth century helped galvanise the Freehold Land Movement, the central tenor of which was the extension of freehold ownership to the artisan and working-class man (Chase, 1991). The right to vote was restricted to those men who owned or rented property above a certain value. This restriction debarred the majority of the adult male population from voting. The Freehold Land Movement saw land ownership as a political tool to increase the number of voters and to effect change. The website *Kidderminster Revolutionaries* explores the politics of the control and the limit of the voting franchise.

In the late 1840's and early 1850's a series of freehold land societies was formed. The first was started in Birmingham in 1847 by James Taylor (Junior) (1814-1887), a zealous non-conformist preacher from Birmingham, who had emerged as a national Temperance leader in 1840 and who wanted to be part of any 'new crusade in the cause of working-class self-help'.

By the end of 1847 Taylor had assisted in the formation of six independent freehold land societies – Dudley, Stourbridge, Coventry, Worcester, Wolverhampton and Stafford. With Birmingham they comprised 2108 members with 2837 shares. By December 1852 there were 130 societies with 85,000 members with 120,000 shares, 310 estates and 19,500 allotted freeholds.

According to *The Freeholder*, the movement's monthly newspaper published from January 1850 (later as *The Freehold Land Times*) it is clear that Taylor was touring the country, possibly focusing on counties where the balance of political parties was so nearly equal, that the addition of a few hundred voters would turn the scale for the Liberal cause, this despite Taylor's declarations to the contrary.

### 4.4 Banbury Freehold Land Society

On 6<sup>th</sup> February 1851 a public meeting of some 300 people was held at Crouch Street British School to hear James Taylor. The aim of the meeting was to launch the formation of the Banbury Freehold Land Society with the further aim of purchasing land at favourable wholesale prices and to sub-divide it into lots which would be available to members through a ballot. Lots could be grouped in order to provide sufficient land for house construction. A further declared aim was to dedicate the organisation to improve the moral, social and political condition of the working classes.

The scheme was advertised in a box advertisement in the *Banbury Guardian* of 10<sup>th</sup> April 1851. The advertisement (**Figure 4**) reveals the name of key officials, many of whom were prominent people in town affairs. Such men as Timothy Rhodes Cobb (banker), John Gazey (spirit merchant), Bernhard Samuelson (industrialist) and William

# BANBURY FREEHOLD LAND SOCIETY.

(Enrolled 27th March, 1851, by the name of "The Banbury Co-operative Benefit Building Society.")

President. HENRY WILLIAM TANCRED, ESQ., M.P.		
Vice-Presidents.		
TIMOTHY RHODES COBB ROBERT FIELD	RICHARD GOFFE JOHN GAZEY	BERNHARD SAMUELSON JAMES SIBLEY WHITTEM.
Trustees.		
JAMES CADBURY	JOHN FISHER	RICHARD GRIMBLY
Treasurers.		
COBB AND SON.		
Sub-Treasurer.		
JOSEPH LUMBERT.		
Secretary.		
D. P. PELLATT.		
Solicitor.		
RICHARD HENRY ROLLS.		
Arbitrators.		
JOSEPH OSBORNE WILLIAM POTTS		
ARTHUR BRISLEY RYE.		

**T**HE Objects of this Society are to improve the Social, promote the Moral, and raise the Political Condition of its Members. The leading feature of this and similar Societies is to form a common fund, by the union of the contributions, of the Members, for the purchasing of Freehold Land, and retailing it to the Members in small Allotments at the *wholesale* price. The great difference between the *wholesale* and *retail* prices of Land is almost incredible. Land selling at from 3s. 4d. to 3s. 6d. per yard *retail*, has been purchased by the Birmingham and Midland Counties' Society at 1s. 1d. *wholesale*; and the allotments are expected shortly to be worth double the retail price.

It is this great difference between the *wholesale* and *retail* price which enables this Society to give to its Members advantages, in the purchase of Land, not attainable by Societies simply formed for Building purposes.

As a safe and profitable pecuniary Investment the Freehold Land Society stands pre-eminent.

In addition to the advantageous Investment for Money, afforded by the Society, Forty Shilling Freeholds will be acquired for its Members, by its operations, in Oxfordshire, Northamptonshire, and Warwickshire.

The Town of Banbury possesses ample means for availing itself of the advantages which this and similar Associations afford. 260 Shares have already been taken, and there is no reason for doubting that this number will soon be largely increased.

Land Societies in other Towns of equal size, which already comprise a numerous proprietary, and have made eligible purchases, sprang from smaller beginnings.

Entrance Fee—One Shilling per Share.

Payments—Two Shillings per Share per Fortnight, till Three Months after Allotment; and from that time Three Shillings per Share per Fortnight; with an additional Sixpence per Share any Subscription Night during the Quarter.

Subscriptions received Fortnightly, on Monday Evenings, at the Society's Room, Mechanics' Institute, Banbury.

Shares can be taken, and any further information obtained, by application to the Secretary.

Country Members can send Post-Office Orders.

Figure 4 Banbury Guardian 10 April 1851

Potts (newspaper editor). The president was the local MP Henry William Tancred. James Cadbury, a Quaker and Temperance leader, was a Trustee. On 27<sup>th</sup> March 1851 the 'Banbury Freehold Land Society' was enrolled as 'The Banbury Co-operative Benefit Building Society.'

The advertisement details the practical development of the process, membership through a one shilling share, emphasising the advantages of wholesale group purchase of land and re-sale at wholesale rather than retail prices. It also notes that the Society was to operate in Oxfordshire, Northamptonshire and Warwickshire. Subscribers were invited to register at the Society's room in the Mechanics Institute on Church Passage.

The formation of the Society was not without reaction, as at that time no activity in Banbury was without its

sectarian implications. Polarisation of local society in the 1850s was exemplified by the activities of the two principal banks and whilst Cobbs Bank supported the Freehold Land Society, opposition was mounted in the form of the Banbury Permanent Benefit Society supported by Gilletts Bank with a Conservative board of directors (Trinder, 2005).

#### 4.5 The Development of the Freehold Land Society Estate

In 1851 thirteen acres of land, north of Middleton Road, 300 yards east of Banbury Bridge, was purchased by Timothy Rhodes Cobb from William Sloan Stanley of Southampton for the sum of £3825 (Oxfordshire County Records Office) and sold on to the Society at the same price. A second meeting of the Society was held later in April 1851, this time in the Town Hall then at the western end of Market Place, when members were told about the allocation of lots. The site, variously

known as South Grimsbury, Freetown or even as 'the Diggings', was divided into 151 allotments. The cost to the allottees varied according to proximity to the turnpike road. The cheapest lots (1-13) were each 1s 8d (now 9p), whereas those close to the road ranged from 3s 6d to 3s 10d (approximately 15p – 18p). The plots were divided between the 101 shareholders, who were bound to observe covenants about building lines and the value of houses to be constructed. Plots were allocated by ballot with plural shareholders taking as many consecutive lots as they held shares.

The subscribers included many of Banbury's Liberal elite, known locally for welfare concerns and included such as Ebenezer Wall (rope maker), Richard Grimly (retailer), William Potts (editor of the *Banbury Guardian*) and James Cadbury, but few working men. Thus the area became one of small scale speculative building rather than owner occupation.

By 1855 some fifty houses had been built or were under construction. There was also an infrastructure of five roads which had become public ways under the control of the Board of Health. Buildings were constructed in singletons, pairs, threes or short terraces. Bernhard Samuelson had subscribed for six shares and drew Nos.41-46, the first two of which became the *Prince of Wales* public house. In Centre Street, plot 37, allocated to William Cubitt, was developed by the builder William Wilkins who erected two houses there in 1861. Plots 66 and 67 won in the ballot by T.H. Wyatt, brewer, and Thomas Dumbleton, saddler, were the site of three dwellings constructed by the builders Thomas and Stephen Orchard in 1858. While the quality of buildings was higher than elsewhere in Banbury the pattern of ownership was no different from other private estates (Trinder, 2005).

The estate grew slowly. Some plots, in particular on the east side of Centre Street, were not developed until the

beginning of the twentieth century. Some plots were used as gardens and thus the area gained the name 'The Diggings'.

The houses along Middleton Road formed the façade of the estate and became a middle-class suburb. James Cadbury owned 5 plots on Middleton Road and was keen to create an attractive approach to Banbury from the east (Potts, 1942). In fact many owners purchased the equivalent plots in South Street and thus obtained long gardens with rear access to their premises. By 1861 there were 22 houses on Middleton Road, the inhabitants included professional men and white-collar workers. Only one William Baker, draper, was a working shopkeeper.



This middle-class bias continued and ten years on the ratio of professional to working-class families on Middleton Road remained the same. Other streets within the freehold estate were, for the most part, inhabited by working-class families and artisans.

#### **4.6 The Development of Land outside the Freehold Land Society Scheme**

It is unsurprising that the success of the Freehold Land Society scheme gave rise to the development of adjacent land. In the early 1870s the east side of

East Street and the west side of West Street, not previously part of the original development, became available. These areas were filled with terraces of up to twelve houses, in contrast to the original estate's small groupings. Other building followed.



Plots on the turnpike road to the east of East Street were sold for building in the early 1870s and by 1871 most of the land between the bridge and the estate had been filled with houses. In 1873 the land to the north of the estate was laid out by Robert Gibbs, after whom the road is now named.



Land to the south-west, along the ancient causeway to Warkworth, had been previously developed in the 1850s and 1860s with working-class housing.



Regents Place was developed by William Wilkins between the years of 1852 and 1871. Duke Street, located at the edge of Wilkins' brick pit, was developed around 1870 (now demolished). South of the Causeway, a new road, later called Merton Street, was developed by various speculators between the years of 1873 and 1882. It is interesting to compare the cramped development of the housing on the Causeway and Merton Street (the 'Railway Terraces') built by the GWR, which were constructed for the company workers to rent, with the contemporary, but more generous, development of the freehold land estate with its 'build-to-own' ethos.



Development of site in the area continued into the twentieth century, Avenue Road constructed in 1911 being a case in point.



In the late 1920s the economy of Banbury was revolutionised by the arrival of new industries and in particular by the relocation of the livestock market to Grimsbury. A site selected due to its proximity to the railway station.

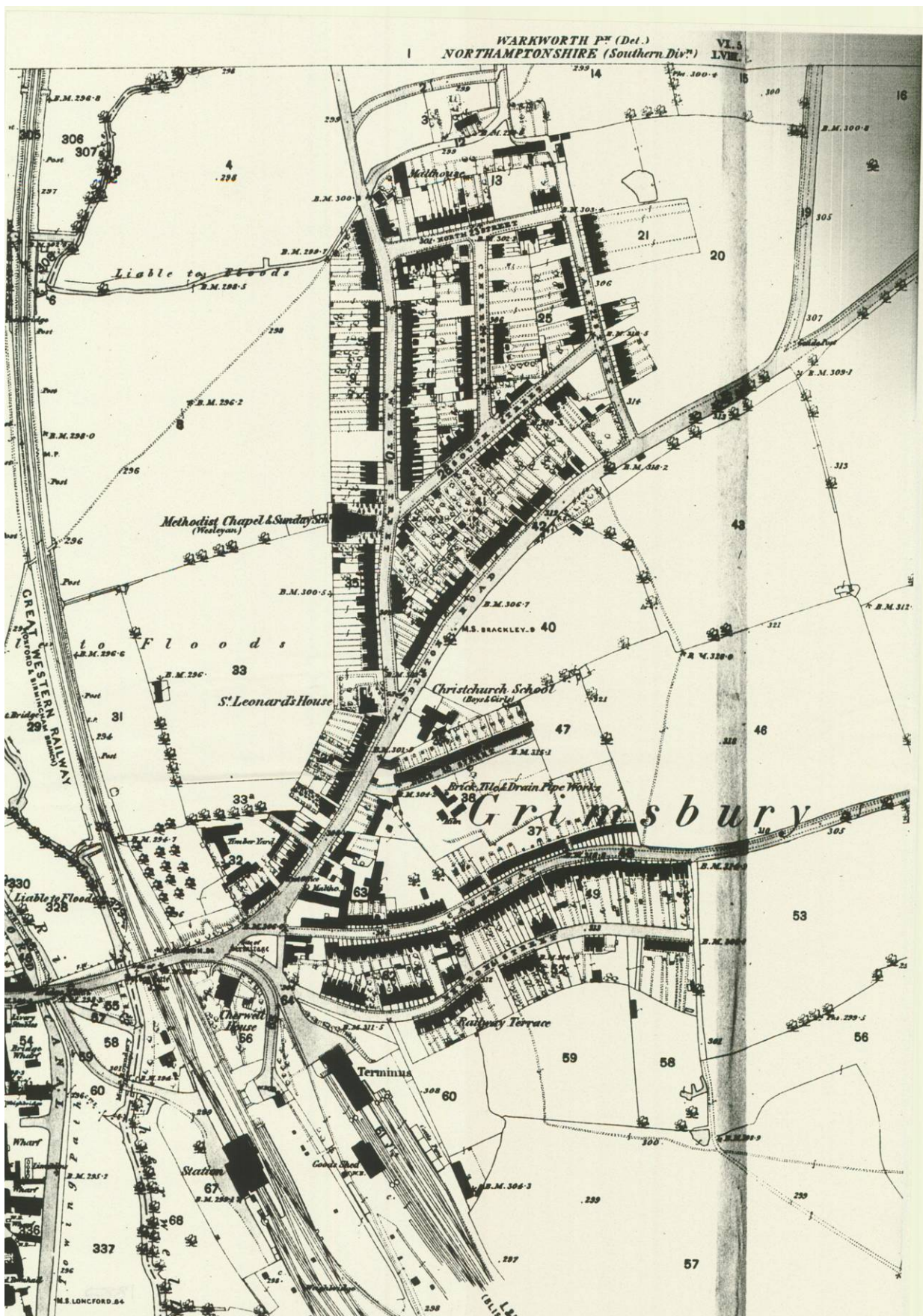


Figure 5 1882 OS Map of Grimsbury.

North Scale.

Note the Brick, Tile & Drain Pipe Works established to provide local building materials.



Figure 6 1900 OS Map of Grimsbury.

North scale



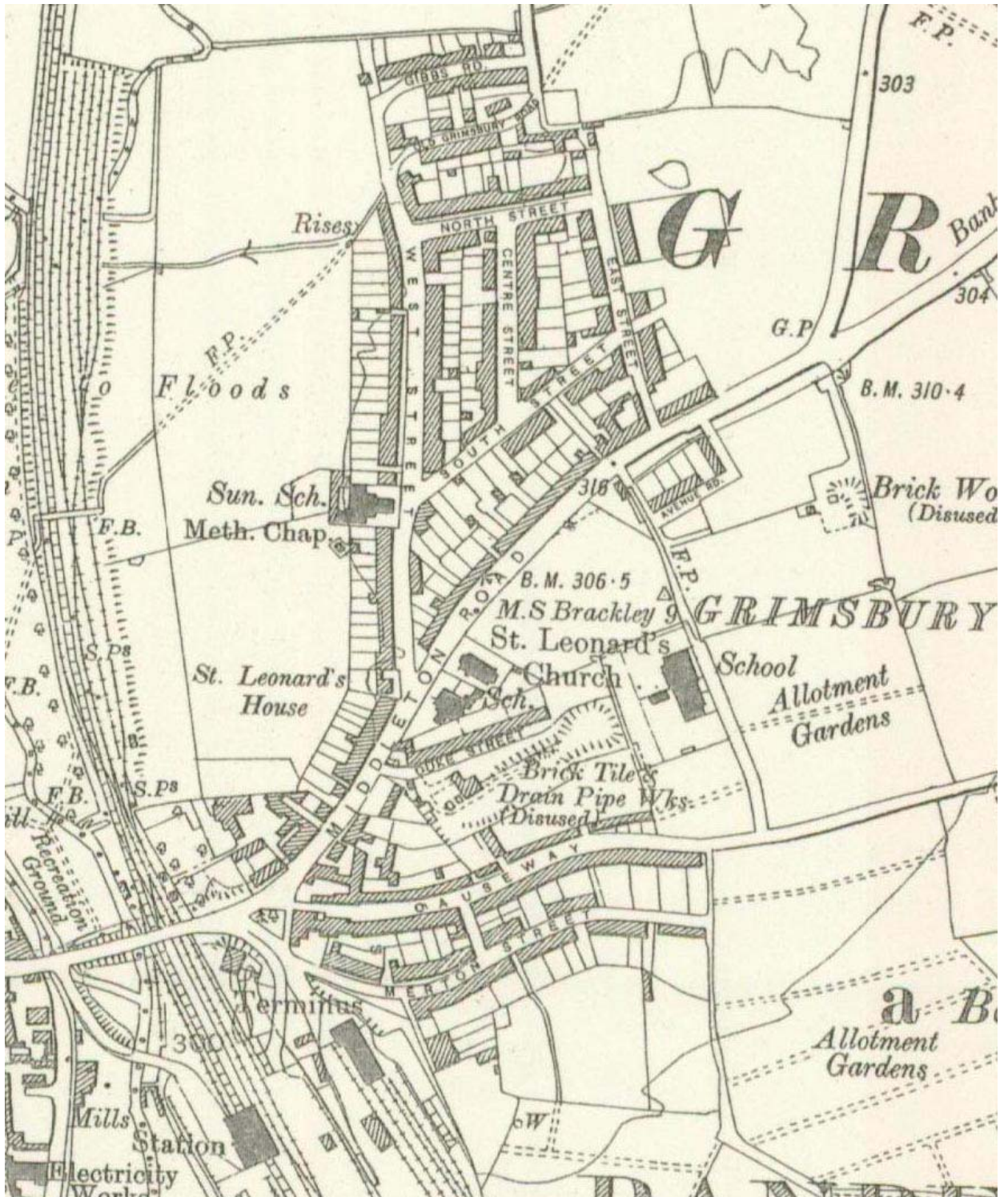


Figure 7 1923 OS Map of Grimsbury.

North Scale

Note the Brick, Tile & Drain Pipe Works are disused by this date.

Note also the creation of allotment gardens.

## 5 Summary of special interest

The importance of the Grimsbury estate is not so much what it is but what it stands for and the historic context of the site. The development of the South Grimsbury area by the Banbury Freehold Society was revolutionary not because of what got built, which were standard nineteenth century dwellings, but because the scheme was based on the innovative principles of working-class self-help.

The Freehold Estate in Grimsbury was established in the heyday of the Freehold movement. It shares, in common with other freehold estates, the dense allocation of lots, provision of a church and public houses (surprising given the strong temperance leanings of the founding fathers). Villa 'gentrification' is marginal and the houses are distinctly urban in character, features which seem to characterise the early days of freehold estate development (Goodey, unpublished document).



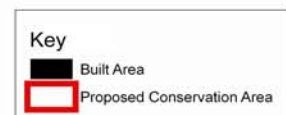
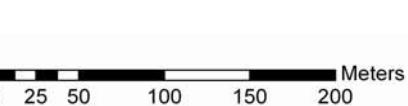
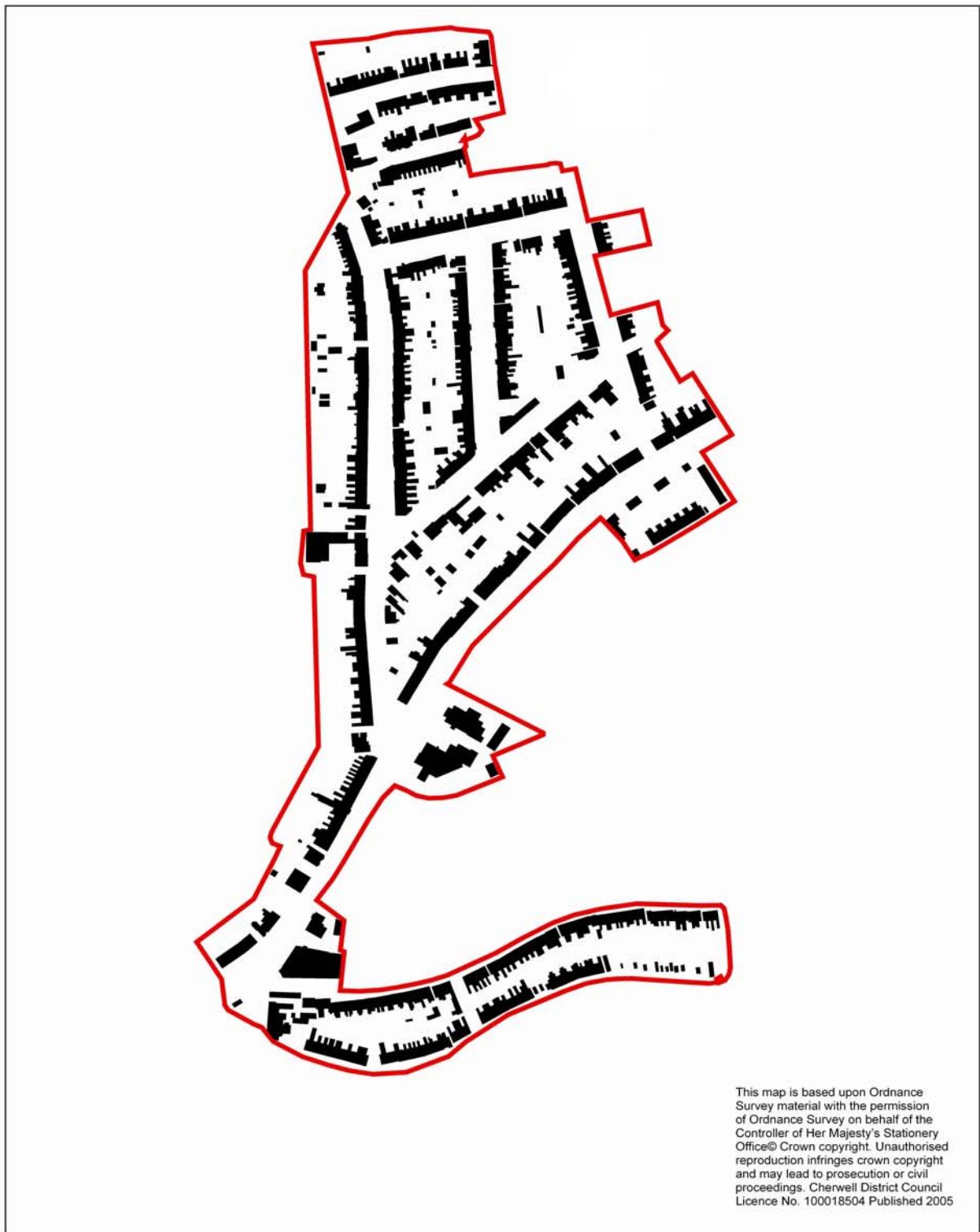


Figure 8 Figure ground plan.

The figure ground plan illustrates the strong building lines framing streets and homogeneity of layout with the grander scale plots along Middleton Road contrasting with the small scale 'railway housing' of Merton Street and Causeway.

## 6 Spatial analysis

This area was set out principally as a residential suburb with non-residential buildings such as the church, the school, shops and public houses strategically located at junctions or in prominent positions along the main thoroughfare. The area is intensively developed and there are no defined public spaces except the streets themselves. The only open space is land to the west of West Street, the residual part of 'The Moors', purchased by the Borough in the early 1930s as a creation ground for the people of Grimsbury (Potts, 1942; Trinder, 2005)

It is interesting to compare the area with that of Newland which was created as a planned self-contained community. The two suburbs have comparable densities of terraced housing with limited numbers of middle-class properties.



### 6.1 Street pattern

The Causeway and Middleton Road were both established highways connecting neighbouring settlements to the east and north east to Banbury.

The streets within the freehold estate are laid out in a planned grid. The layout of the streets; West Street, North Street, East Street, South Street and Centre Street, is such as to maximise the number of potential building plots within the freehold land. The development of the west side of West Street, the land to the north of North

Street and the east side of East Street was facilitated by the development of the freehold land although to a certain extent independent from it. The laying-out of Merton Street parallels Causeway and similarly was facilitated by the development along the Causeway but not part of the Freehold Land Estate.

### 6.2 Means of enclosure

No architectural evidence of former land use exists and no boundaries predating the mid 19th century development are evident. The existence of front walls enhances the very strong building line created by the terraced housing. Building lines are generally strong and continuous throughout the area except Moorfield Court at the south-east end of West Street, the garages on the east side of East Street and the east end of Merton Road. There are a range of front boundary treatments; frequently the original walls and railings no longer survive and this has given rise to individualism in the choice of front boundary treatment.

### 6.3 Views

Due to the level topography and the density of development there are no panoramic views into or out of the area. In fact New Grimsbury is a remarkably inward looking area with buildings enclosing all views out.



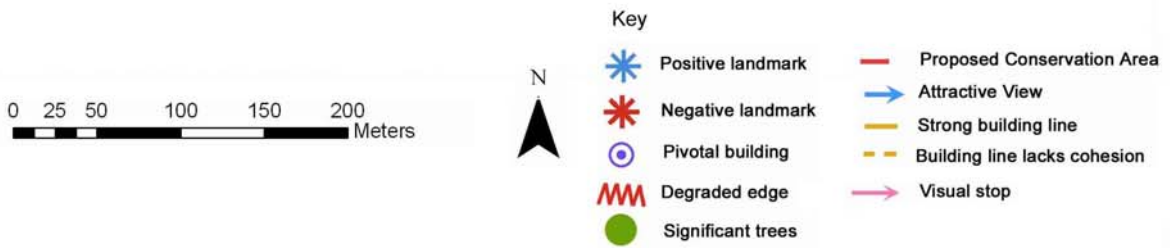
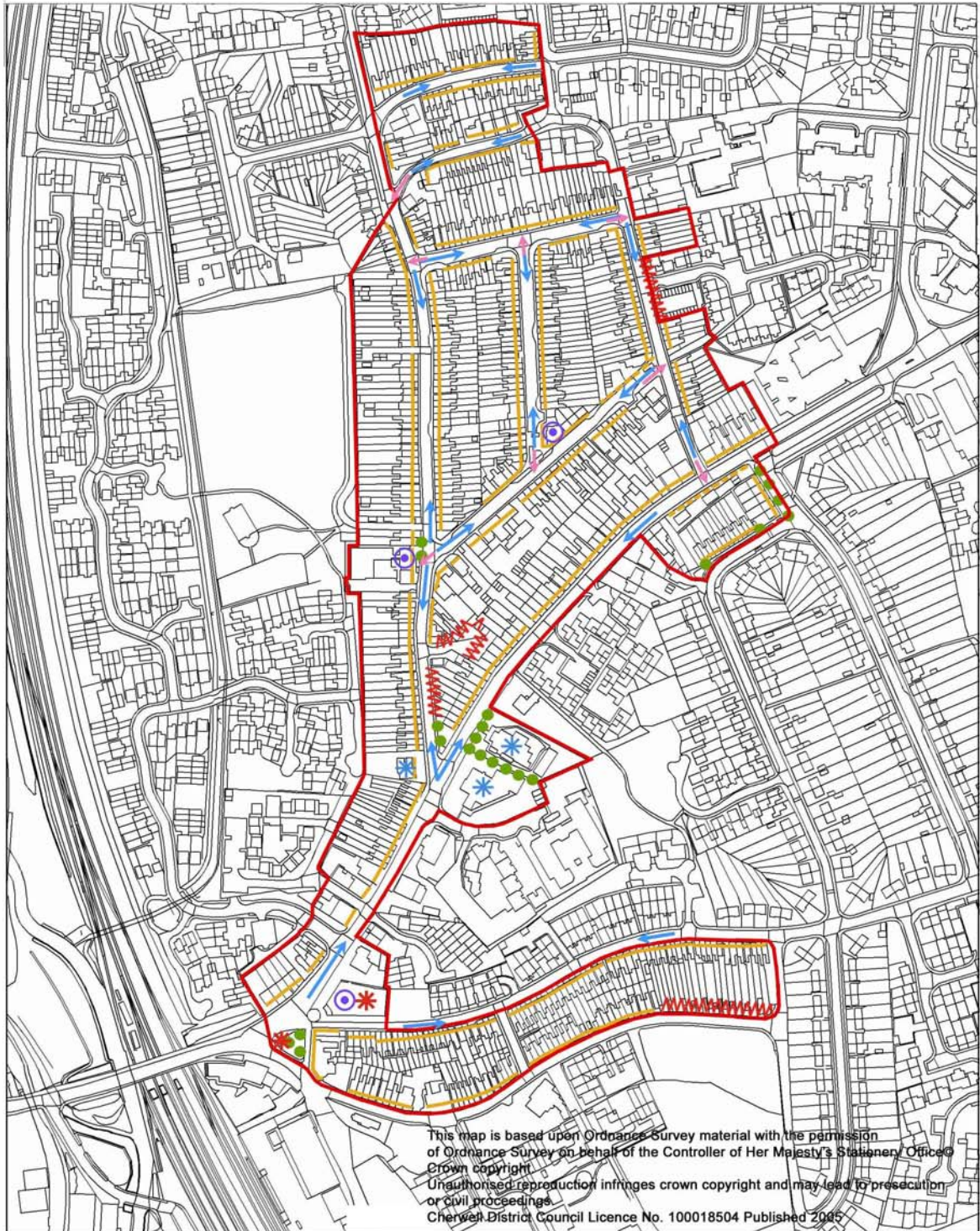


Figure 9 Visual analysis.

## 7 Character analysis

The area comprises the Freehold Estate development to the north of Middleton Road, including the corridors of land to the west of West Street and the east of East Street, the land to the north of North Street developed in the 1870s and the area associated with the old causeway to the south.



### 7.1 Land use

The historic character of this residential suburb is defined by its mix of mid to late 19th century urban housing. Within the area there were and remain a number of shops, public houses, a church and a former primary school. Such local facilities appear common to the early freehold land schemes throughout the Midlands.



### 7.2 Building age, type and style

The area is dominated by terraced housing built principally for the working classes from about 1850 to early 1900s. The development of the housing outside the freehold land estate was to a greater extent

undertaken as a speculative venture, whilst the layout within the freehold land estate was planned.

The various architectural styles of the day such as Gothic, Italianate, Classic Revival, are all represented within the area. Within the freehold land estate the choice of architectural style seems to have been one of personal preference so that different architectural styles mingle as neighbours. This eclectic mix of architectural style is also prevalent across the wider area and is also seen in the middle-class housing along Middleton Road.



Outside the freehold land estate, especially along Causeway and Merton Street the range of architectural styles and decoration are much less flamboyant and seem restricted to a limited amount of poly-chrome brick banding.



### 7.3 Construction and materials

The houses, for the most part, have been constructed as narrow-frontage deep-plan terraces of varying length,

built of the locally produced Liassic brick (see Figures 5 & 6, showing the brick works located on the south side of Middleton Road) enlivened by simple decorative features, although there are some later yellow-brick properties (Gibbs Road and east end of Middleton Road). The terraces have Welsh slate roofs with brick chimneys with pots.



#### 7.4 Fenestration and doors

All properties would have originally been built with vertically sliding sash windows and panelled doors. A large number of the dwellings have a ground floor bay window. Some properties have dormer windows.



Much of the original detailing, such as the nineteenth century doors, windows and any stained glass in front doors has been lost and replaced with modern mass-produced furniture. A number of unfortunate porch and roof additions have also appeared in recent years. However, enough houses remain little altered to give the impression of the homogeneity of appearance that at one time existed and a small number of buildings still retain detailing of quality,

such as the front door surround on St Leonard's House.

#### 7.5 Scale and massing

Within the freehold estate land the allocation of consecutive plots to individual share-owners has given rise to consecutive small scale housing development; houses appearing as singletons, pairs or short terraces of three or four dwellings.



The number of floors is similarly inconsistent and varies from one group of houses to its neighbours, so there are two-storey, two and a half and three storey dwellings all located within close proximity. All have small front gardens.



Plot sizes appear to have been generous as measured by comparison with the housing of Causeway which was developed around the same time. The most generous plots reserved for the envisaged higher-class housing on Middleton Road.



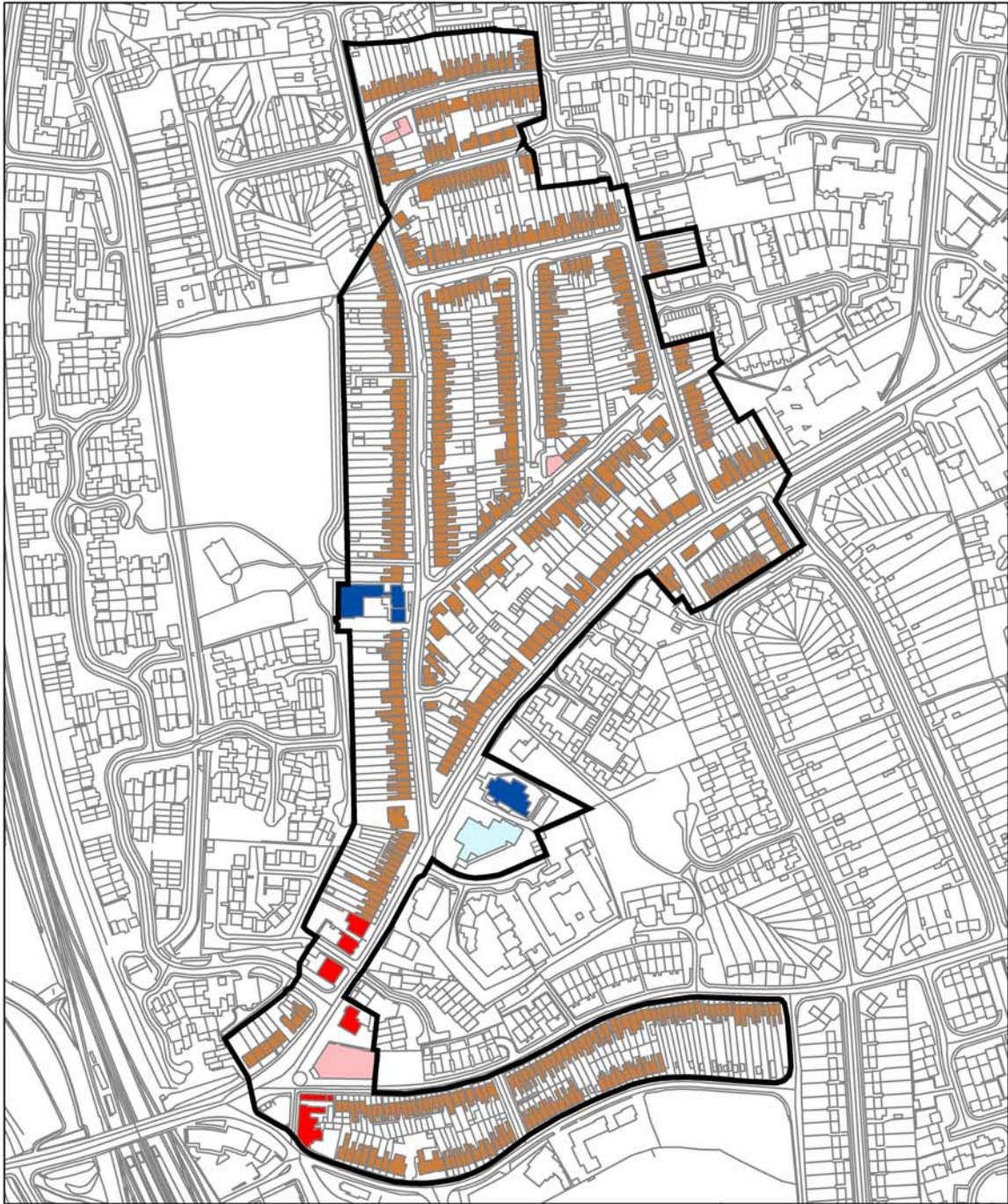
Outside the freehold estate land speculative housing development has given rise to longer terraces of housing. As a result of this the west side of West Street, for instance, has a more coherent and unified appearance. The land between Causeway and Merton Street is intensively developed with humble, relatively undecorated terraced housing commensurate with working-class housing provision of the 1850s

and 1860s. The impression is that of a cramped linear arrangement of houses lining the street. Again the speculative background of the development had given rise to terraces of varying lengths.

The limited middle class housing located on Middleton Road can be identified by the wider frontages and more elaborate detailing and some retention of rear access via South Street.







0 20 40 80 120 160 Meters



**Key**







-  Proposed Conservation Area
-  Residential
-  Church
-  Former School
-  Commercial Buildings - currently trading
-  Formerly Commercial buildings

Figure 10 Land use.

## 8 Proposed boundary

A conservation area is "*an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance*".

The conservation area principally covers the area to the north of Middleton Road and east of the Oxford Railway that was purchased by T.R. Cobb in 1852 and transferred to the Banbury Freehold Society, plus adjacent land that was developed around about the same time.

In addition to the land north of Middleton Road, the boundary encompasses the sites of the School and Church of St Leonard and the 'Railway' terraced housing located between Causeway and Merton Street.

### West Boundary

From the junction of Bridge Street and Middleton Road the boundary heads north to include the dwelling and garden of No. 9 Middleton Road and adjacent properties. The boundary then runs along the rear boundary of properties in Middleton Road and West Street. At No 139 West Street the boundary follows the eastern side of the footpath, including the eastern boundary fence. The boundary then continues north along and including the east kerb of West Street as far as the rear boundary of No. 1 Gibbs Road.

### North Boundary

The conservation area boundary then follows the rear garden boundary of Nos. 1 to 21 Gibbs Street and the garden boundary of No. 7 Manor Road.

### East Boundary

At No. 7 Manor Road the conservation area boundary runs south along the west kerb of Manor Road. At No. 21a Gibbs Road the boundary tracks west then south along the west boundary of 38 Old Grimsbury Road (which is itself

excluded from the conservation area). The conservation area boundary then runs east again along the rear garden boundaries of Nos. 15 to 32 North Street.

At East Street the conservation area boundary run south along the eastern kerb but deviating to include Nos. 45 to 50 East Street and Nos. 64 to 76 East Street and along the household boundary of No 167 Middleton Road.

### South Boundary

At No. 167 Middleton Road the boundary runs east for 16 meters and then crosses Middleton Road to follow the west kerb of Howard Road as far as No 51. At this point the boundary then turns west to follow the northern kerb of Avenue Road. Then at the junction between Avenue Road and School View the boundary heads north-west following the household boundary of No 80 Middleton Road.

### South Boundary

At Middleton Road the boundary runs west along the southern kerb of the road, deviating to include the church and former school buildings of St Leonard. At No. 12 Middleton Road the boundary turns west following the rear boundary of the plot to include this premises and the adjacent Bridge Motors site within the conservation area.

At Causeway the boundary runs east along the southern kerb to include the terraced housing situated between Causeway and Merton Street. At Back Edwards Street the boundary turns south and then runs west along the northern kerb of Merton Street. At the Elephant and Castle the boundary runs north to include the Hornton stone wall on the west side of the island located in front of the public house to join up with the boundary at No 9 Middleton Road.

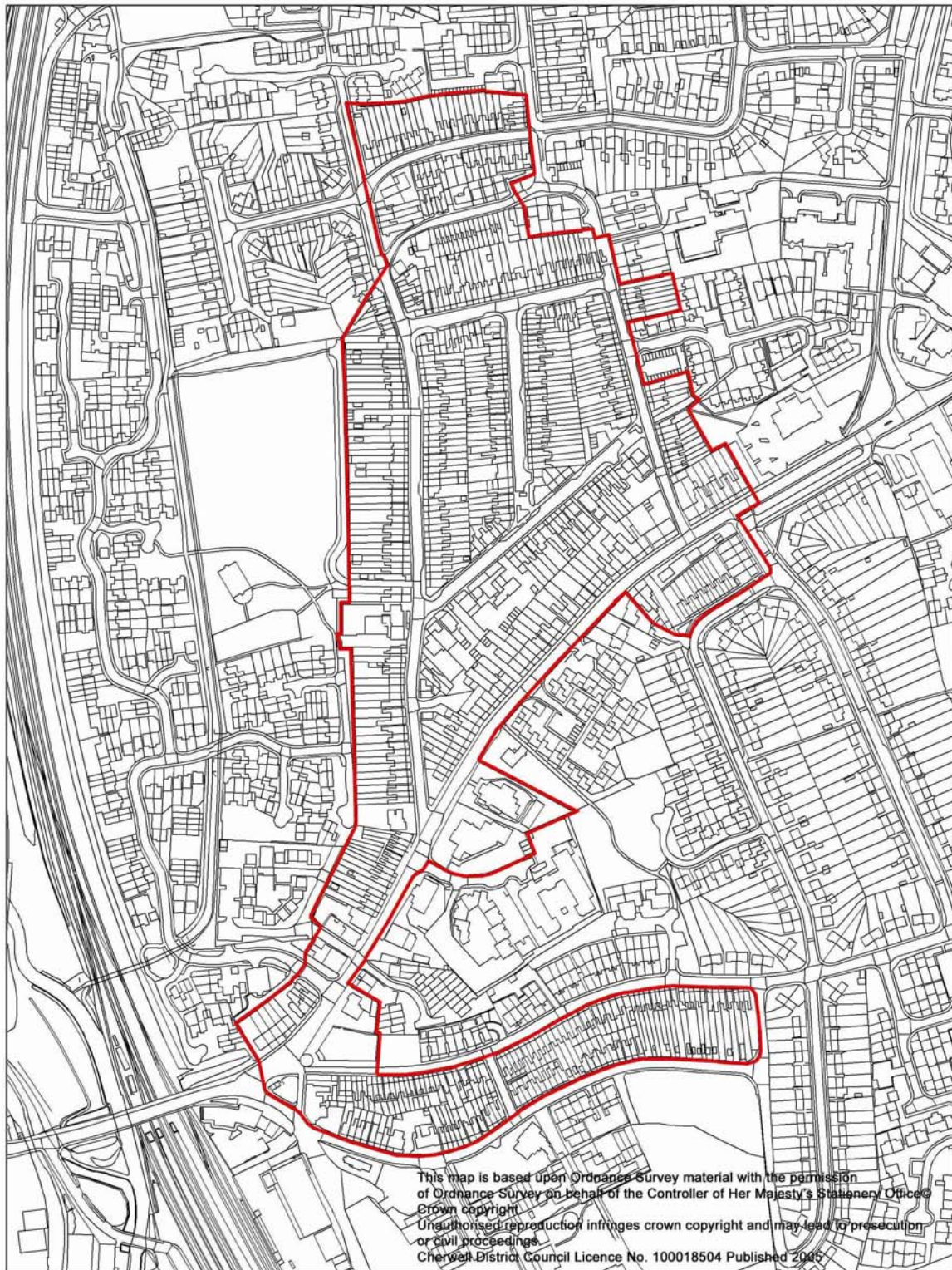


Figure 11 Proposed conservation area boundary

## 9 Management Proposals

### 9.1 Policy context

The 1990 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act places a duty on local planning authorities to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of its conservation areas. In line with English Heritage guidance (2005b) Conservation Area Management Proposals are to be published as part of the process of area designation or review. Their aim is to provide guidance through policy statements to assist in the preservation and enhancement of the Conservation Area.

The main threat to the character and appearance of any Conservation Area is the cumulative impact of numerous alterations, some quite small in themselves, to the traditional but unlisted buildings within the area. These changes include such works as the replacement of traditional window casements, usually with uPVC double-glazing, replacement of original doors,

additions such as non-traditional porches and erection of satellite dishes on the front elevations of properties. Such alterations to unlisted residential properties are for the most part permitted development and therefore do not require planning permission. Unauthorised alterations and additions are also a cause for concern and are often detrimental to the appearance of a property. Both unsympathetic permitted development and unauthorised development cumulatively result in the erosion of the historic character and appearance of the conservation area.

The aim of management proposals is not to prevent changes but to ensure that any such changes are both sympathetic to the individual property, sympathetic to the streetscape and overall enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area.

The principal policies covering alterations and development of the historic built environment are given in Appendix 1

### 9.2 Generic Guidance

The Council will:

1. Promote a policy of repair rather than replacement of traditional architectural details. Where repairs are not feasible then the promotion of bespoke sympathetic replacement should be encouraged. This is particularly the case for windows when sympathetic refenestration is important in preserving the appearance of the building in the design and materials.
2. Actively promote the use of traditional building and roofing materials in new building work, extensions and repair.
3. Actively promote the retention of buildings identified as being of local historic or architectural interest both within and outside the conservation area.
4. Use the local list as a material consideration to be taken into account with other considerations when determining planning applications that would affect such buildings. All other things being equal, the conversion of old buildings of local interest is preferable to the demolition and redevelopment of sites.
5. Expect the scale, massing, proportions and height of new buildings to reflect those of the existing built environment of the immediate context or of the wider conservation area context. Layouts, boundary treatments and landscaping schemes will also be

expected to make clear visual reference to those traditionally found within in the area.

6. Strive to ensure that the conversion of traditional buildings to alternative uses will be achieved with minimal intervention and without the destruction of original

character. Features and equipment pertinent to the building's original function (e.g. grinding machinery, chutes and races in mills) where they exist should be retained as part of any conversion (English Heritage (2006)).

### 9.2.1 Enhancement and management of the public realm

The Council will:

1. Encourage a general level of good maintenance of properties.
2. Actively promote the harmonisation of appearance within the individual terraces or pairs of properties, i.e. groups of houses built by one builder should have identical, traditional windows casements as they would have done when first built.



3. Encourage sympathetic refenestration where inappropriate windows have been inserted.
4. Promote tradition styles of pointing. The type of pointing in stone or brickwork is integral to the appearance of the wall or structure. It is therefore of great importance that only appropriate pointing is used in the repointing of stone or brickwork. Repointing work should be discrete to the point of being inseparable from the original. 'Ribbon' pointing and similar is considered an inappropriate style of pointing for this district.
5. Promote the use of lime mortar in the construction and repointing of

stone and brickwork is strongly advocated. This is a traditional building material and its use is benefit to traditional buildings. This is in contrast to hard cementaceous mortars often used in modern construction, which can accelerate the weathering of the local soft building stone and locally-made nineteenth century brick.

6. Require satellite dishes to be sited on rear elevations or within rear gardens.
7. Encourage the location of solar panels on rear roof slopes or on outbuildings within rear gardens.
8. Discourage the use of uPVC in the construction of windows, doors and conservatories as its widespread use is detrimental to the appearance of the conservation area.
9. Discourage disfiguring alterations such as unsympathetic extensions, altering the dimensions of window openings and the removal of chimneys.
10. Exercise a presumption against artificial cladding material, including render, on the front elevations of buildings.
11. Exercise a presumption in favour of alterations and extensions where the design is sympathetic to the existing buildings in scale, materials and design.
12. Support the construction of new buildings on infill plots which are sympathetic to the intrinsic

character of the area in terms of scale, design and materials.

13. Promote a design solution that enables wheeled refuse bins to be discretely screened within front gardens.
14. Investigate whether inappropriate alterations to dwellings have planning permission or listed building consent as appropriate.
15. Promote the retention of boundary walls and gateways.



16. Promote the repair or replacement of lost or inappropriate boundary treatments with traditional walling or fences in a style appropriate to the location.
17. Promote the enclosure of rear access to plots where the boundary walls have been demolished.
18. Promote the retention of historic paving materials.
19. Limit the range of material used to pave pedestrian areas.

20. Actively promote the use of a co-ordinated range of street furniture to encourage harmony.
21. Promote the retention of traditional shop frontages whilst providing incentives for the improvement of inappropriate shop frontages.
22. Encourage the sympathetic location of both amenity and private security lighting to limit light 'pollution'. The material and design of the fitting should also be considered.
23. Liaise with local residents and the Highway Authority over the potential to introduce residents parking zones where appropriate to reduce the impact of parked cars.



### 9.2.2 Management and protection of important green spaces

1. Encourage the retention of front gardens and walls.
2. Investigate the potential for the introduction of street trees where none exist and street and pavement widths lend themselves to such considerations, for example on Centre Street.
3. Promote positive management of vegetation. Trees and hedges make an important contribution to the character and appearance of a conservation area. Planning of exotic imports or inappropriate varieties, such as Leylandii, are to be strongly discouraged.

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## 11 Appendix 1

There are a number of policy documents which contain policies pertaining to the historic built environment. The main policies are summarised in this section. Other

### **Oxfordshire structure plan 2016**

**EN4** The fabric and setting of listed buildings including Blenheim Palace and Park, a World Heritage Site, will be preserved and the character or appearance of conservation areas and their settings will be preserved or enhanced. Other elements of the historic environment, including historic parks and gardens, battlefields and historic landscapes will also be protected from harmful development.

### **Cherwell local plan 1996**

**H5** Where there is a demonstrable lack of affordable housing to meet local needs, the district council will negotiate with developers to secure an element of affordable housing in substantial new residential development schemes. The district council will need to be satisfied that such affordable housing: (i) is economically viable in terms of its ability to meet the need identified (ii) will be available to meet local needs long term through secure arrangements being made to restrict the occupancy of the development (iii) is compatible with the other policies in this plan.

**C18** In determining an application for listed building consent the council will have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest. The council will normally only approve internal and external alterations or extensions to a listed building which are minor and sympathetic to the architectural and historic character of the building.

**C19** Before the determination of an application for the alteration, demolition or extension of a listed building applicants will be required to provide sufficient information to enable an assessment to be made of the likely impact of their proposals on the special

policies of a more general nature are also of some relevance; these are not listed here but can be found elsewhere in the specific documents mentioned below.

**EN6** There will be a presumption in favour of preserving *in situ* nationally and internationally important archaeological remains, whether scheduled or not, and their settings. Development affecting other archaeological remains should include measures to secure their preservation *in situ* or where this is not feasible, their recording or removal to another site.

interest of the structure, its setting, or special features.

**C20** Special care will be taken to ensure that development which is situated within the setting of a listed building respects the architectural and historic character of the building and its setting.

**C22** In a conservation area planning control will be exercised, to ensure *inter alia*, that the character or appearance of the area so designated is preserved or enhanced.

**C23** There will be a presumption in favour of retaining buildings, walls, trees or other features which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area.

**C30** Design control will be exercised to ensure: (i) that new housing development is compatible with the appearance, character, layout, scale and density of existing dwellings in the vicinity; (ii) that any proposal to extend an existing dwelling (in cases where planning permission is required) is compatible with the scale of the existing dwelling, its curtilage and the character of the street scene; (iii) that new housing development or any proposal for the extension (in cases where planning permission is required) or



conversion of an existing dwelling provides standards of amenity and privacy acceptable to the local planning authority.

### **Non-statutory Cherwell local plan 2011**

**EN39** Development should preserve listed buildings, their features and settings, and preserve or enhance the character or appearance of designated conservation areas, as defined on the proposals map. Development that conflicts with these objectives will not be permitted.

**EN40** In a conservation area or an area that makes an important contribution to its setting planning control will be exercised to ensure, *inter alia*, that the character or appearance of the area so designated is preserved or enhanced. There will be a presumption in favour of retaining buildings, walls, trees or other features which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area. A new development should understand and respect the sense of place and architectural language of the existing but should seek to avoid pastiche development except where this is shown to be clearly the most appropriate.

**EN45** Before determination of an application for planning permission requiring the alteration, extension or partial demolition of a listed building, applicants will be required to provide sufficient information to enable an assessment of the likely impact of the proposals on the special architectural or historic interest of the structure, its setting or special features.

**EN45A** The inclusion of a building in a local list of buildings of architectural or historic interest adopted by the council for planning purposes will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications that would affect it.

**EN47** The Council will promote sustainability of the historic

**C36** In considering applications in conservation areas the council will pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area.

environment through conservation, protection and enhancement of the archaeological heritage and its interpretation and presentation to the public. In particular it will: (i) seek to ensure that scheduled ancient monuments and other unscheduled sites of national and regional importance and their settings are permanently preserved; (ii) ensure that development which could adversely affect sites, structures, landscapes or buildings of archaeological interest and their settings will require an assessment of the archaeological resource through a desk-top study, and where appropriate a field evaluation; (iii) not permit development that would adversely affect archaeological remains and their settings unless the applicant can demonstrate that the archaeological resource will be physically preserved in-situ, or a suitable strategy has been put forward to mitigate the impact of development proposals; (iv) ensure that where physical preservation in-situ is neither practical nor desirable and sites are not scheduled or of national importance, the developer will be responsible for making appropriate provision for a programme of archaeological investigation, recording, analysis and publication that will ensure the site is preserved by record prior to destruction. Such measures will be secured either by a planning agreement or by a suitable planning condition

**EN51** In considering applications for advertisements in conservation areas the council will pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area.

## Acknowledgements

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