



# Juniper Hill Conservation Area Appraisal

## March 2009

Planning, Housing and Economy

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# 1. Introduction

Juniper Hill is a rural hamlet of scattered dwellings situated 7 miles (11.2Km) north of Bicester close to the busy A43.

The settlement was first established in the late 18th century originating with just two cottages in 1754 as an offshoot of nearby Cottisford.

The majority of the inhabitants being employed in local agriculture the population peaked in the 19th century and fell with the mechanisation of the early 20th century.

Juniper Hill was made famous as 'Lark Rise' in the novels by Flora Thompson which recall her childhood in 1880s rural Oxfordshire.

It is this well documented social history, as well as the evocative nature of the hamlet, which makes Juniper Hill of particular note and led to its designation as a Conservation Area in 1980.

This document is the first appraisal of Juniper Hill since its designation and aims to highlight the special character of the hamlet which it is desirable to preserve and enhance.

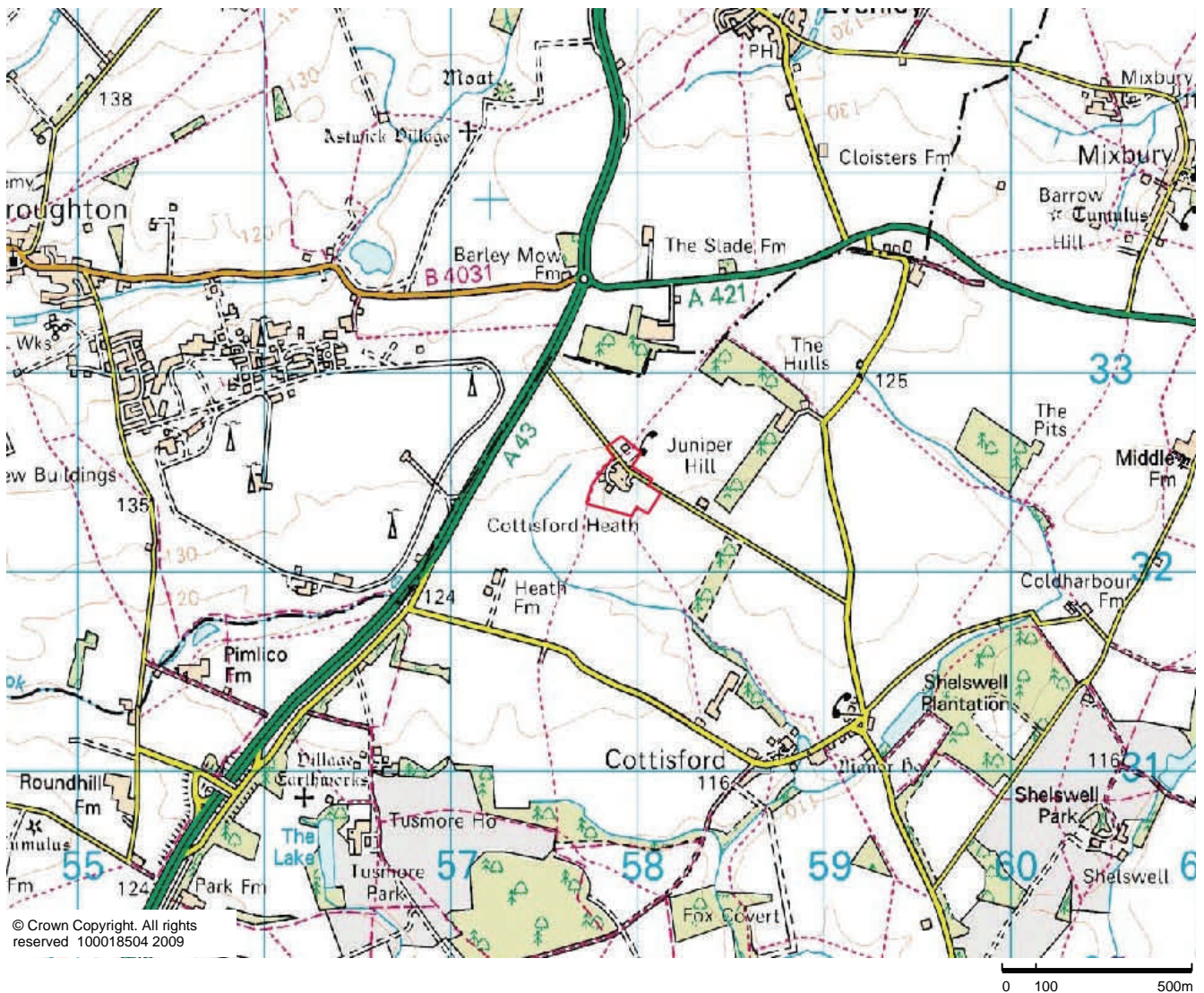


Figure 1: Location

# 2. Planning Policy Context

## 2.1 Conservation Area Designation

The planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 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 by the Civic Amenities Act of 1967. Some 8,000 Conservation Areas have been designated in England, including 56 in Cherwell District.

Juniper Hill Conservation Area was designated in 1980. This designation reflects the importance placed on the value of Juniper Hill's historical, aesthetic and architectural character.

Local planning authorities have a duty under the Act to consider boundary revisions to their Conservation Areas 'from time to time'. The boundary of Juniper Hill Conservation Area has not been reviewed since its designation in 1980. This document extends the Conservation Area to include the playing field at the south east edge of the hamlet.

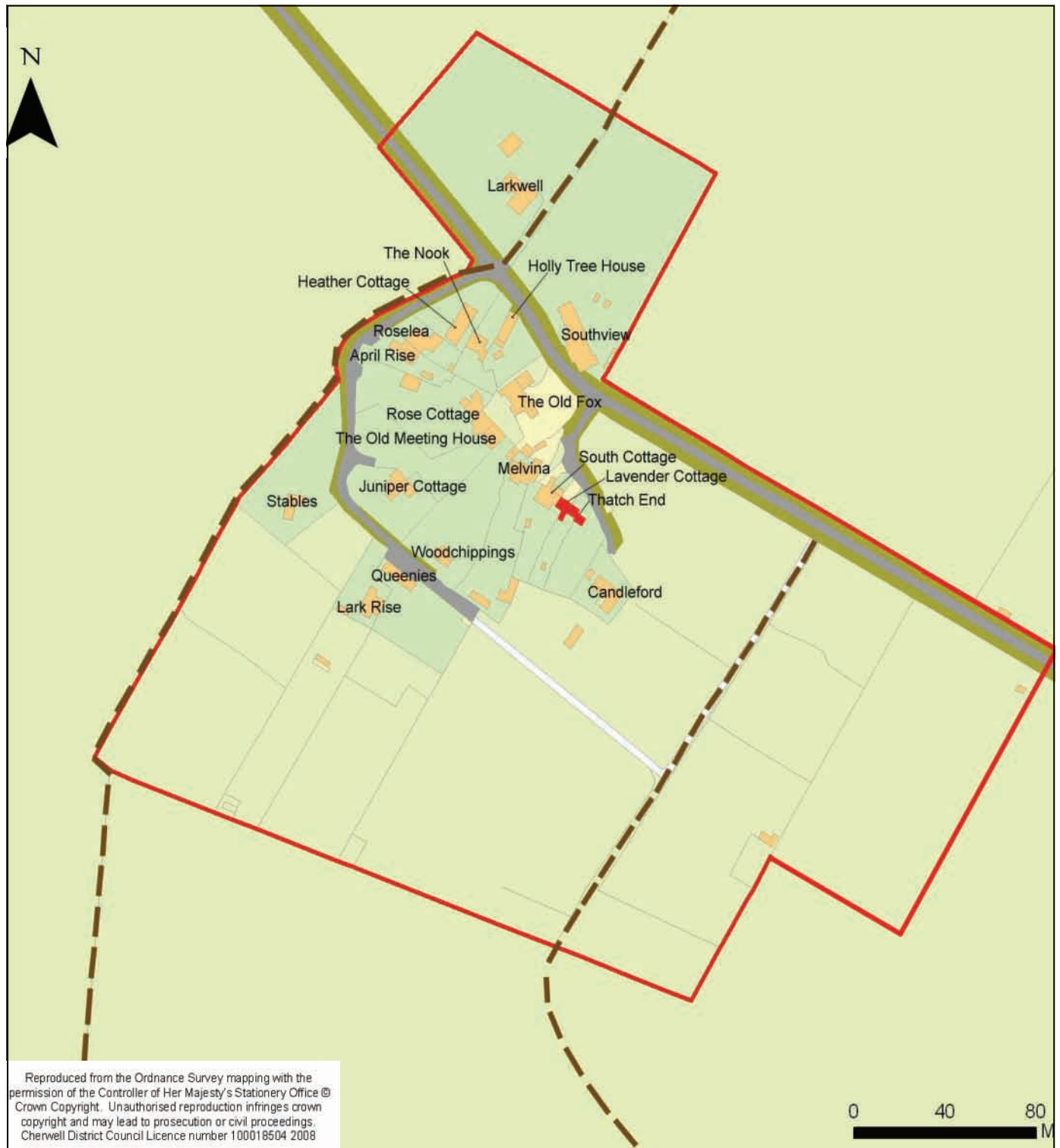
This document is based on a standard recording format derived from advice contained in documents published by English Heritage (2005a). By writing a full Conservation Area appraisal for Juniper Hill, the special character and appearance can be identified and protected by ensuring that any future alteration preserves or enhances that identified special character.

This document has been the subject of public consultation and has been amended as a result of comments received. Once approved this document will be used as a material consideration in the determination of applications in the Conservation Area and its setting.





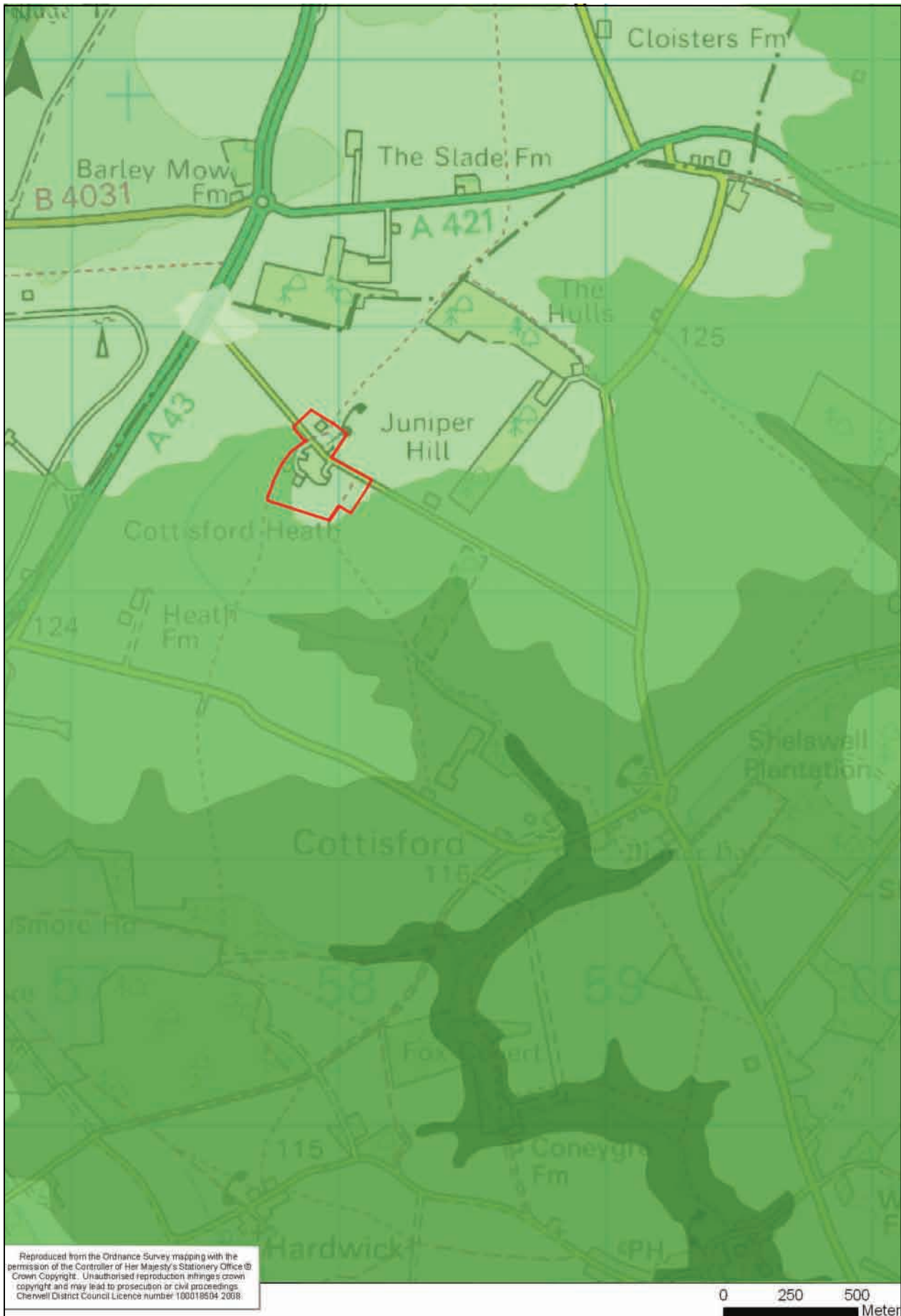
**Figure 2: Area Designations**



- Conservation Area
- Public Right of Way
- Listed Building

There are no TPOs (Tree Preservation Orders), scheduled ancient monuments, SSSIs (Sites of Special Scientific Interest) or other designations within or immediately adjacent to the Conservation Area.

Figure 3: Topographical map



### 3. Location and Topography

Juniper Hill sits within the parish of Cottisford. Much of the parish was once heath land and Juniper Hill falls within the area known before the Inclosures as northern Cottisford Heath.

The hamlet is situated on the White limestone and Cornbrash of the Great Oolite belt. The predominant building material of the area is a rough bluish-grey limestone which contains shell debris and has a high clay content.

The topographical map shows that Juniper Hill does lie on slightly higher land than its surroundings but this is difficult to discern on site, despite giving the settlement its name.

Juniper Hill lies within the Oxfordshire Estate Farmlands landscape area defined by the Cherwell District landscape assessment (Cobham Resource Consultants, 1995).

The landscape around the village is arable with extensive fields punctuated by small copses and coverts. The field boundaries are mainly mature mixed species hedgerows. Road verges are generous widths and often have a hedge on either side. In places the structure of the landscape is disappearing as intensive arable use has resulted in the removal of field boundaries so that only lines of hedgerow trees remain.

**Fig 4: 2004 Aerial view of the village including the Conservation Area boundary**





# 4. History of Juniper Hill

## 4.1 Origins

4.1.1 The hamlet originated in 1754 when two cottages were built for the poor at a cost of £28 7s. 6d. (the money was raised by a rate charged on the surrounding landowners). However it was not until the Inclosures of the common fields in 1854 that the hamlet grew to its present size. The name simply derives from the abundance of juniper growing in the surrounding heathland.

## 4.2 Archaeology

There is little recorded archaeology in or around Juniper Hill but the proximity of the settlement to the Oxford-Brackley road and the Medieval buildings of Cottisford suggest that this may well be the result of lack of exploration rather than lack of material.

## 4.3 History

The parish of Cottisford contained a settlement thought to have been of a similar size to Juniper Hill in the 12th century or earlier. It is believed that this hamlet disappeared in the 1340s having been recorded as declining in 1343 and it is probable that this was due to the Black Death. It is suggested that the site of this hamlet, known as Cote, was on the eastern side of the Crowell Brook and its name stemmed from the local landowning family of De Cotes.

The area had no one resident lord of the manor, lands between Cottisford and Juniper Hill being owned by Bec Abbey in the 1100s and later Eton College. There are references in 1700 of 8 acres of land being ploughed for Eton College on Juniper Hill which was at that time part of the Cottisford Heath.

Apart from Eton College, the only proprietors in the parish in the 18th century were the rector and the non-resident Fermor family of Cottisford. The Fermor trustee owned most of the cottages within Juniper Hill in the 1850s.

By the end of the 19th century there were about 30 cottages, mostly built on lands ceded as 'squatters' rights'. It was during this century that the population within the parish peaked, 269 people being recorded in 1861. The agricultural depression saw numbers drop to 240 by 1881 and 154 in 1951.

Flora Thompson was born Flora Jane Timms in the hamlet on 5th December 1876 and was educated at Cottisford school. She was the daughter of a local stonemason and her popular trilogy (Lark Rise to Candleford) is an important social document recording life in Juniper Hill and the surrounding settlements.



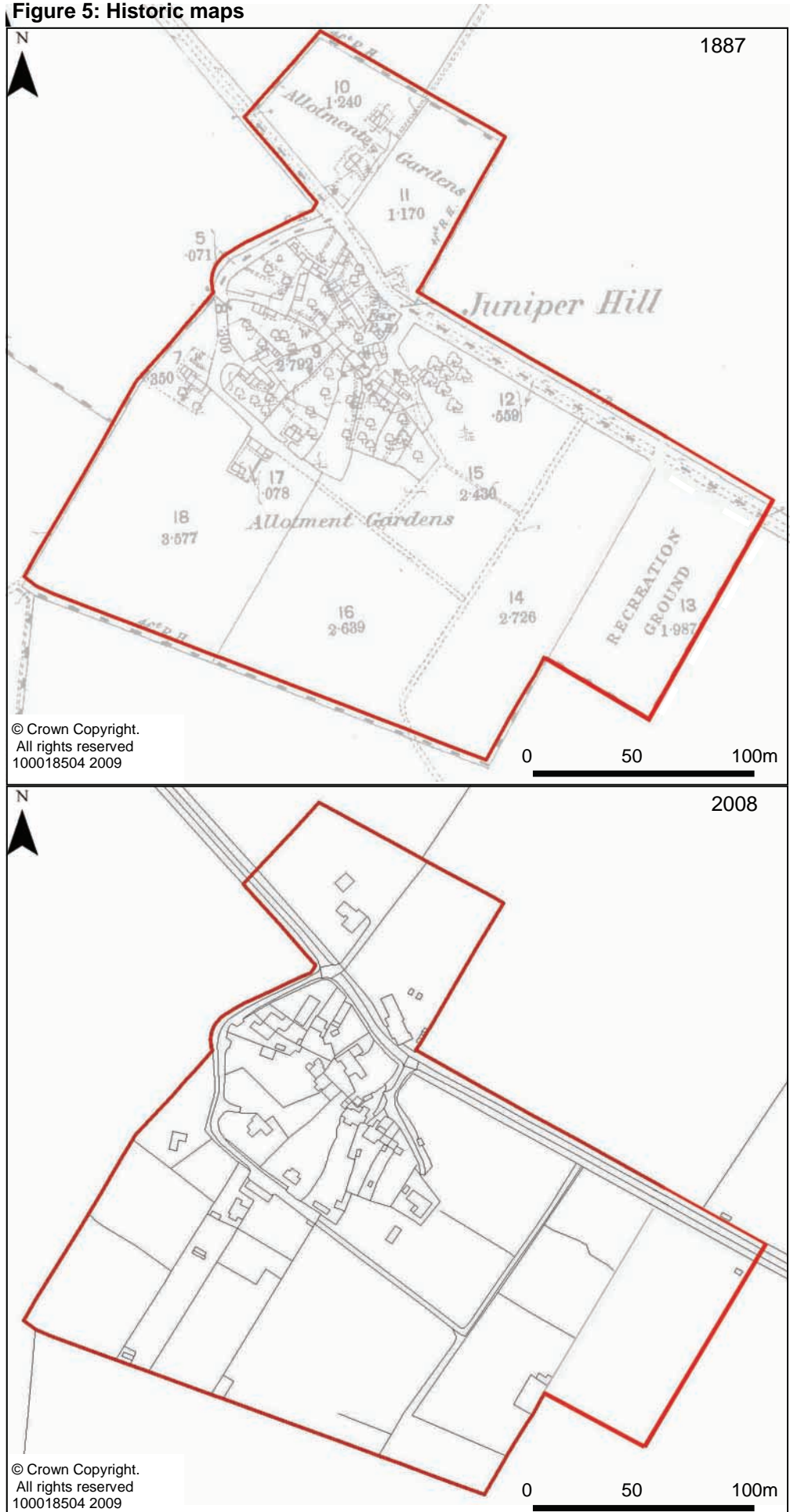
*Flora Thompson*

Juniper Hill had no church, most of the inhabitants walked the mile to the Medieval St. Mary's in Cottisford, although the rector did occasionally visit the hamlet. There is little evidence of non-conformist activity within Juniper Hill but Flora Thompson describes a small group of Methodists who met in a cottage in the hamlet in the 1880s.

Juniper Hill's inn, the 'Fox', came into existence between 1852 and 1864 and figures in Flora Thompson's Lark Rise to Candleford as 'The Wagon and Horses'. The inn closed in the 1990s and is now a private house.



Figure 5: Historic maps



*THE hamlet stood on a gentle rise in the flat, wheat-growing north-east corner of Oxfordshire. We will call it Lark Rise because of the great number of skylarks which made the surrounding fields their springboard and nested on the bare earth between the rows of green corn. All around, from every quarter, the stiff, clayey soil of the arable fields crept up; bare, brown and windswept for eight months out of the twelve. Spring brought a flush of green wheat and there were violets under the hedges and pussy-willows out beside the brook at the bottom of the 'Hundred Acres'; but only for a few weeks in later summer had the landscape real beauty. Then the ripened cornfields rippled up to the doorsteps of the cottages and the hamlet became an island in a sea of dark gold.*

*To a child it seemed that it must always have been so; but the ploughing and sowing and reaping were recent innovations. Old men could remember when the Rise, covered with juniper bushes, stood in the midst of a furzy heath-common land, which had come under the plough after the passing of the Inclosure Acts. Some of the ancients still occupied cottages on land which had been ceded to their fathers as 'squatters' rights', and probably all the small plots upon which the houses stood had originally been so ceded. In the eighteen-eighties the hamlet consisted of about thirty cottages and an inn, not built in rows, but dotted down anywhere within a more or less circular group. A deeply rutted cart track surrounded the whole, and separate houses or groups of houses were connected by a network of pathways. Going from one part of the hamlet to another was called 'going round the Rise', and the plural of 'house' was not 'houses', but 'housen'. The only shop was a small general one kept in the back kitchen of the inn. The church and school were in the mother village, a mile and a half away.*



Going round the Rise

*A road flattened the circle at one point. It had been cut when the heath was enclosed, for convenience in fieldwork and to connect the main Oxford road with the mother village and a series of other villages beyond. From the hamlet it led on the one hand to church and school, and on the other to the main road, or the turnpike, as it was still called, and so to the market town where the Saturday shopping was done. It brought little traffic past the hamlet. An occasional farm wagon, piled with sacks or square-cut bundles of hay; a farmer on horseback or in his gig; the baker's little old white-tilted van; a string of blanketed hunters with grooms, exercising in the early morning; and a carriage with gentry out paying calls in the afternoon were about the sum of it. No motors, no buses, and only one of the old penny-farthing high bicycles at rare intervals. People still rushed to their cottage doors to see one of the latter come past.*

*A few houses had thatched roofs, whitewashed outer walls and diamond-paned windows, but the majority were just stone or brick boxes with blue-slatted roofs. The older houses were relics of pre-enclosure and were still occupied by descendents of the original squatters, themselves at that time elderly people. One old couple owned a donkey and cart, which they used to carry their vegetables, eggs, and honey to the market town and sometimes hired out at sixpence a day to their neighbours. One house was occupied by a retired farm bailiff, who was reported to have 'well feathered his own nest' during his years of stewardship. Another aged man owned and worked upon about an acre of land. These, the innkeeper, and one other man, a stonemason who walked the three miles to and from his work in the town every day, were the only ones not employed as agricultural labourers.*

*Some of the cottages had two bedrooms, others only one, in which case it had to be divided by a screen or curtain to accommodate parents and children. ....*

*But Lark Rise must not be thought of as a slum set down in the country. The inhabitants lived an open-air life; the cottages were kept clean by much scrubbing with soap and water, and doors and windows stood wide open when the weather permitted. When the wind cut across the flat land to the east, or came roaring down from the north, doors and windows had to be closed; but then, as the hamlet people said, they got more than enough fresh air through the*



# 5. Architectural History



*Thatch End*

**5.1** The only listed buildings within the village are Japonica Cottage (now called Thatch End) and the cottage abutting it to the right. The listing describes Thatch End as 18th century with 20th century alterations and constructed of colourwashed coursed limestone rubble with a steeply pitched thatched roof. Originally a one unit labourers dwelling the cottage was extended to a two unit plan. The building is two storeys with a four window range of timber casements. The interior holds an inglenook fireplace with bread oven and chamfered wood bressumer and beam. The cottage also has a number of internal plank doors with strap hinges, common rafters visible on the first floor, partitions and a wooden winder staircase.

**5.2** The adjoining cottage (now called Lavender Cottage) is of a similar age, having been built in the 18th century and is also constructed in colourwashed limestone rubble but has a tile roof. This cottage retains its one unit plan with two storeys, the second storey possibly added when the thatch was removed. The interior is listed as containing a chamfered beam, 19th century fireplace, wood winder stairs and strap hinged plank doors.



*The Old Fox*

**5.3** Elsewhere in the hamlet there are several other buildings of architectural interest which although unlisted are important to the historic character of the settlement. The Fox Inn (now called The Old Fox) is a prominent two storey building with an attached stable, with hayloft above. Typical of a rural vernacular building with the exception of the lean-to canopy that runs the length of the property the old inn has been sensitively converted to a private dwelling.

**5.4** The limestone rubble construction of The Fox Inn represents the dominant building material within the hamlet, although in some cases as with Thatch End and Lark Rise Cottage, the limestone is lime or colourwashed. Lark Rise Cottage and the adjacent Queenie's Cottage are important both in the architectural and social history of the hamlet. Both are referred to in some detail in Flora Thompsons 'Lark Rise to Candleford'; Lark Rise Cottage, the house in which Flora grew up, features in the book as 'The End House'. From these descriptions we know that both Cottages were once thatched and have been much extended in the last 50 years.



*The End House*

**5.5** The older buildings within the hamlet have never been of a particularly high quality due to the origins of Juniper Hill as a squatter settlement. There are a number of buildings in and around the hamlet that have disappeared as a result of their poor materials, build or simply because they were unable to accommodate the modern comforts of the 20th century. There has been some infill development, notably the bungalows on The Rise, and all the properties have been upgraded with modern services but, overall, the hamlet retains a strong rural vernacular character.



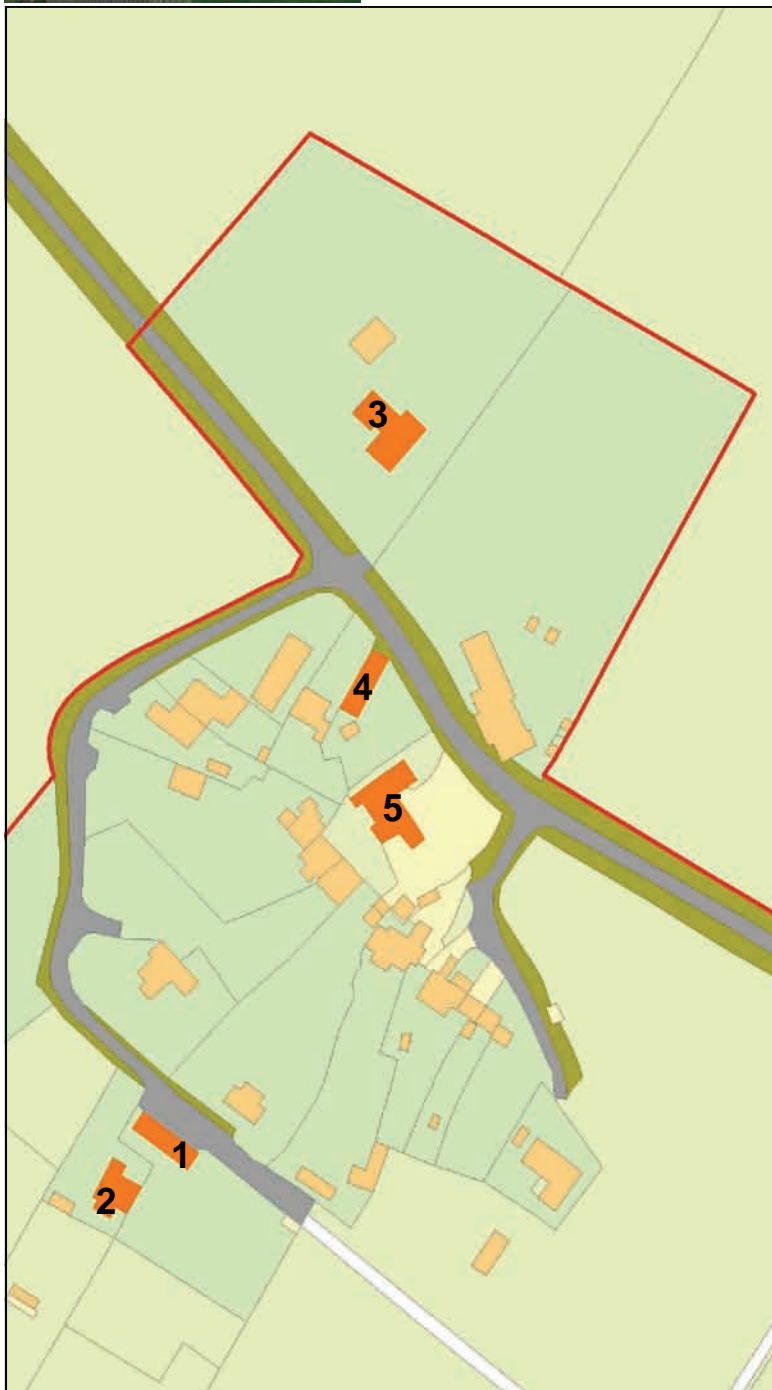
**Figure 6: Unlisted buildings that make a positive contribution**



**1-Queenie's Cottage and 2-Lark Rise (right)** are of particular interest as the home of Queenie and Twister and The End House respectively in Flora Thompson's Lark Rise to Candleford. Although both have been much extended in the 20th century they both make a positive contribution to the hamlet and to understanding its literary connotations.



**3-Larkwell** appears to be of 19th century origin with 20th century additions. The building is limestone rubble with red brick decoration which was possibly added when several cottages were converted into a single property. The front garden contains a well mentioned in Flora Thompson's work. The property and its front boundary wall play an important role in views through and into the hamlet.



**4-Hollytree House** although 20th century, possibly with earlier origins, is a positive landmark on the road through the hamlet



**5-The Fox Inn** is a 18th century limestone building with later extensions which has a small attached stable. It has particular social history interest as the Wagon and Horses in Lark Rise to Candleford.



# 6. Character of Juniper Hill

## 6.1 Land use

The buildings within the hamlet are entirely residential with outbuildings, barns and stables associated with now almost entirely used for domestic purposes. The settlement has no church, shop or public house.

The hamlet contains a large number of allotments for the size of the settlement (although these are shared with neighbouring Cottisford) and these are positioned to the east with paddocks to the south and north west. The land within the Conservation Area boundary is a complex patchwork of small scale cultivation which is clearly delineated from the surrounding large arable fields.

## 6.2 Street pattern, footpaths, means of enclosure

Juniper Hill has only one road - a single track unclassified road from the A43 to the network of minor roads in the area. The road passes through the centre of the hamlet with a back lane known locally as the Rise connecting the rear properties, paddocks and allotments to the main route. The main road is surfaced in tarmac while the Rise is an unadopted and unsurfaced lane. There are no footways in the hamlet but some concrete kerbing is present outside Southview and bollards have been introduced on this corner. There are no streetlights but overhead wires are dominant on the through road.

Public Rights of Way run along the north west and south east sides of the settlement, the southern path cutting through the allotments before continuing towards Cottisford. The importance of these routes historically are seen on older maps and is also made apparent in descriptions of trips from the hamlet made by Flora Thompson in her first book.

The main form of enclosure within the hamlet is limestone rubble walling although mixed hedgerows are also widely used. The hedgerows round the Rise are taller than those found at the edges of the allotments with some mature trees incorporated. The allotments display simple post fencing typical of the rural location and use of the land. There are a wide variety of gateways within Juniper Hill, which, together with other smaller individual details, gives the hamlet a very distinctive quirky character.



*Hedges on the Rise are important to its enclosed character*



*The allotments separate the hamlet from surrounding countryside to the east*

## 6.3 Trees, hedges and open spaces

There are a large number of trees within the Hamlet with evergreens in particular playing an important role in marking the boundary of the settlement. Several mature deciduous trees act as landmarks within Juniper Hill, the horse chestnut in front of The Old Fox and the black walnut tree at the northern edge of the allotments are impressive specimens. The hamlet also contains a number of other walnut trees and a juniper which contribute to the character of the settlement. On the outer edges of the Conservation Area the hedges are lower and resemble field hedges in their species make-up. The grass verges together with the lack of road markings throughout Juniper Hill help to maintain the rural character of the settlement. The position of the open space within Juniper Hill is key to the character of the conservation area. There are allotments to the south and east around the central settlement which clearly distinguish the small scale cultivation from the arable fields. In turn the allotments are very distinct from the gardens of properties in the hamlet which, often hedged in, are well tended. Some of the gardens contain large numbers of bird feeders, which, together with the general tranquillity of the hamlet, create an untouched and remote atmosphere unusual in a settlement so close to a busy dual carriageway.



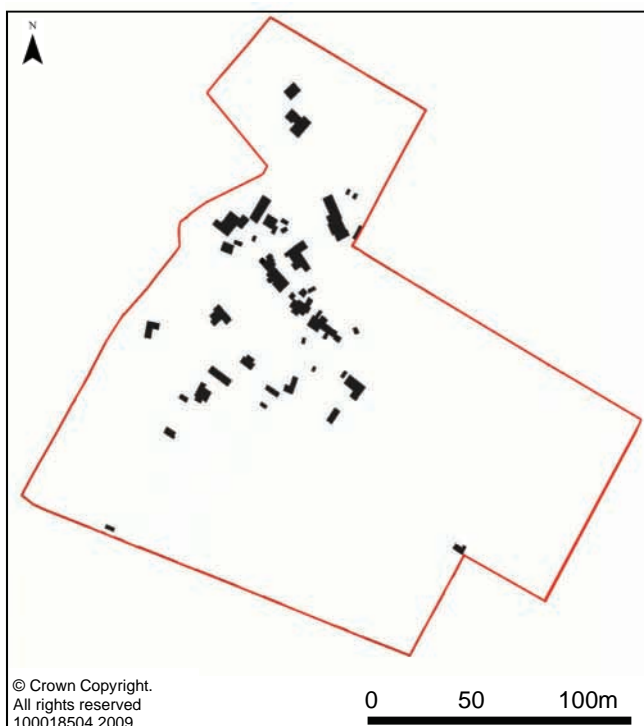
## 6.4 Building age, type, style and materials

There are a number of buildings surviving from the original settlement which date from the mid 18th and early 19th century. The older constructions are mostly simple rural vernacular cottages closely associated with an area of land. The historical lack of wealth of the hamlet and its relatively recent origins mean that Juniper Hill is unusual in having no grand houses. The hamlet contains a significant number of 20th century infill buildings. Many of the older dwellings have recent alterations and extensions. With the exception of The Fox Inn there are no obvious conversions within the hamlet.

Windows and doors mostly adhere to the simple vernacular style with basic timber balanced casements on most of the older properties with some use of Upvc, while doors are mostly timber plank with some fanlights or glass panels.

The local limestone is widely used in rubble construction, some buildings such as Larkwell have brickwork surrounds to windows and a number of buildings are colour or limewashed. Welsh slate is used as the roofing material on older properties with Thatch End being the only remaining thatched dwelling. The more modern structures are predominantly constructed of reconstituted stone with concrete tile roofs.

Figure. 7: Figure ground plan



## 6.5 Scale and massing

The buildings within the hamlet have no clear pattern but appear scattered with some, in particular Southview, Hollytree Cottage and The Old Fox, facing the road through the settlement. Others sit alongside the Rise but the lane appears to have built up as a result of the houses rather than the dwellings being positioned on the route. Figure 7, Figure ground plan, illustrates a quite dispersed settlement pattern with buildings scattered apparently randomly, relating to their individual plots rather than a linear street.

All buildings are of a relatively small scale with most being 1 or 2 storey, well spaced and set back from the road edge within their own gardens. Many properties retain a small outbuilding within their gardens although most appear to be fairly temporary structures or conversions of earlier pig sties or small sheds. Access to properties such as Lark Rise Cottage are traditionally from the southern elevation to maximise the daylight. With no row of street front elevations, properties, particularly those on the Rise, have only small gateways or car access visible from the public domain. A variety of gateways allowing glimpses into the gardens from the Rise adds to the individual and unique character of the hamlet.



Larkwell, brick detailing in the limestone construction

## 6.6 Features of special interest

Juniper Hill is not an ancient settlement in comparison to many of the other conservation areas within the district but in many ways it could be seen as the settlement that engages people most with north Oxfordshire's rural history through its social history recorded in Flora Thompson's Lark rise to Candleford trilogy. The hamlet is still evocative of the period in the 1880s of which she was writing and many of the buildings and routes she described remain today.



## 6.7 Views

Due to the flat topography of the area and the small scale of the buildings within Juniper Hill, most areas within the hamlet enjoy views into the surrounding countryside. This is important in retaining the visual connection with the origins of the settlement. The exception to this are the views along the lane known as the Rise where sight lines are short and high hedges enclose the route. This produces a series of deflected views with glimpses of open land through gaps in the hedgerow.

The proximity to the road of the houses in the centre of the village creates an impression of a narrowing of the carriageway creating linear views out of and into the village along straight stretches of road.

The level topography also means that the nearby Croughton USAF/RAF base and A43 are visible from the north of the village and can be intrusive in views from the north west of the hamlet. The traffic on the A43 is audible from the hamlet and can also be intrusive at busy times of day.

The visual connection between the settlement and its agricultural context is worthy of retention. This connection is particularly obvious to the southern side of the hamlet and any development which interrupted views from the allotments towards Cottisford would be detrimental to the character of the Conservation Area.

The views into the area from the Public Rights of Way to the south are historically important, particularly from the path to the south east where there is a stile into the allotments which is referenced several times in Lark Rise to Candleford.



*View through the centre of the hamlet looking north*



*View across the allotments looking north east*

## 6.8 Threats

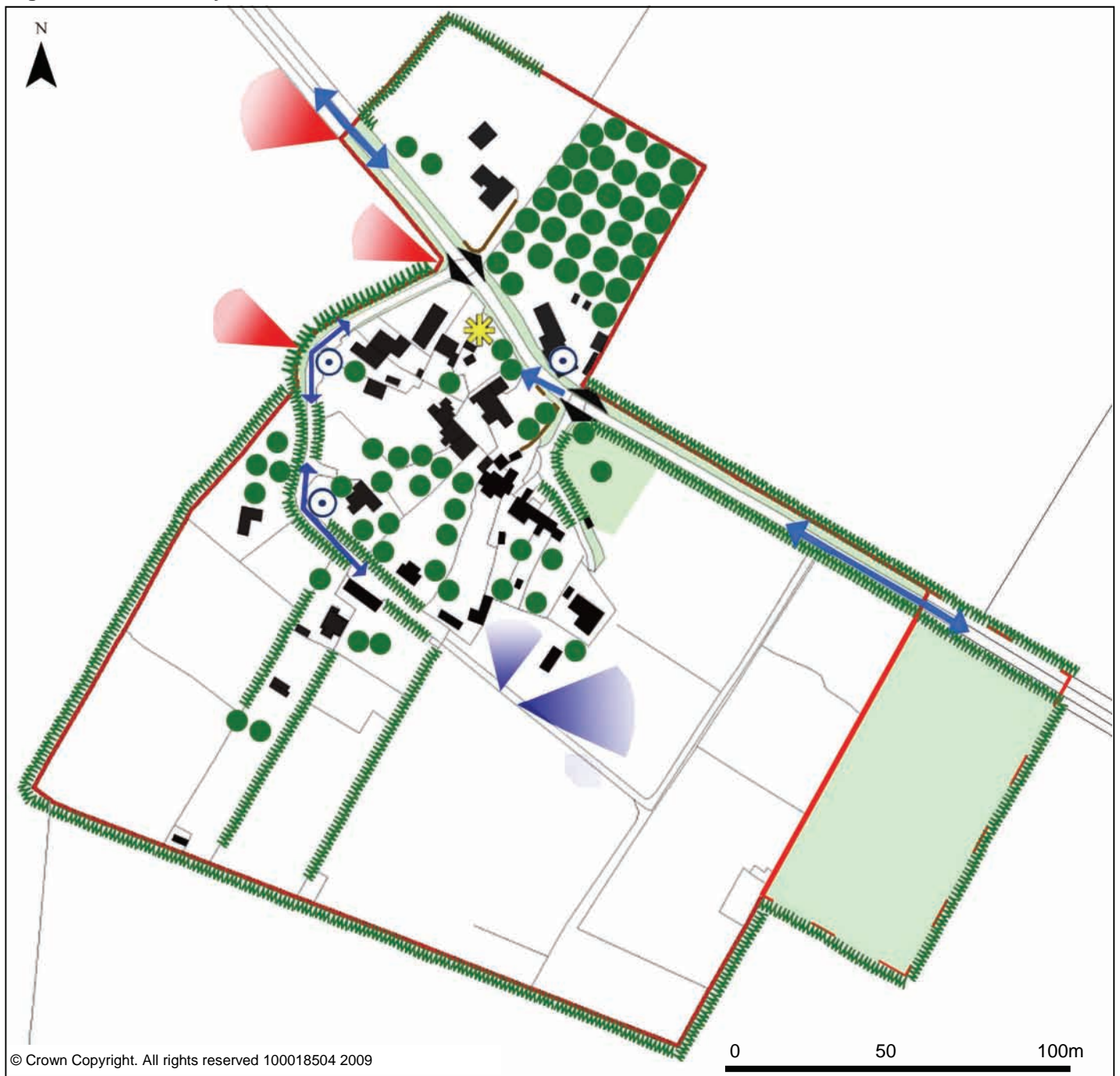
Juniper Hill is well known as Lark Rise in Flora Thompson's books and this brings with it benefits in understanding and appreciation of its history but also the threat of increased numbers of visitors to what is a very small settlement. Dramatisations by the BBC have recently created more awareness of the book and resulted in an increase in visitors. It is important that signage, measures to ensure residents' privacy, erosion of grass verges and other changes that could occur as a result do not detract from the informal rural character of the area.

Although Juniper Hill has little through traffic some cars do travel at speed through the village. The bollards positioned outside Southview are a preventative measure taken after a car collided with the corner of the property. Whilst bollards may be necessary for the safety of residents it is important that urbanising influences are kept to a minimum. The grass verges and the rough surface of the Rise in particular are areas where an excessive number of urban features could threaten Juniper Hill's rural character. Occasional resurfacing of the Rise is necessary to allow residents' access but where possible hardcore infill rather than tarmac should be used.




*Some measures have been taken to welcome visitors*

Figure 8: Visual Analysis



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- |   |                            |   |                              |
|---|----------------------------|---|------------------------------|
|  | Conservation Area Boundary |  | Key Vegetation or Trees      |
|  | Positive Vista             |  | Valuable Hedgerows           |
|  | Positive View              |  | Pivot Point                  |
|  | Negative View              |  | Pinch Point                  |
|  | Deflected View             |  | Positive Landmark            |
|  | Important Green Space      |  | Characteristic Boundary Wall |

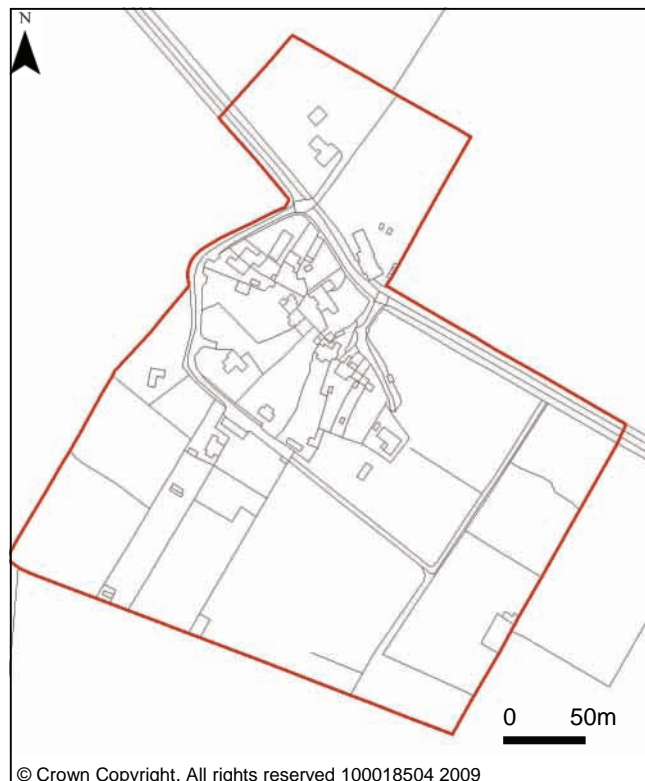
# 7. Boundary justification

The Conservation Area boundary includes all the buildings within the hamlet and the associated cultivated plots.

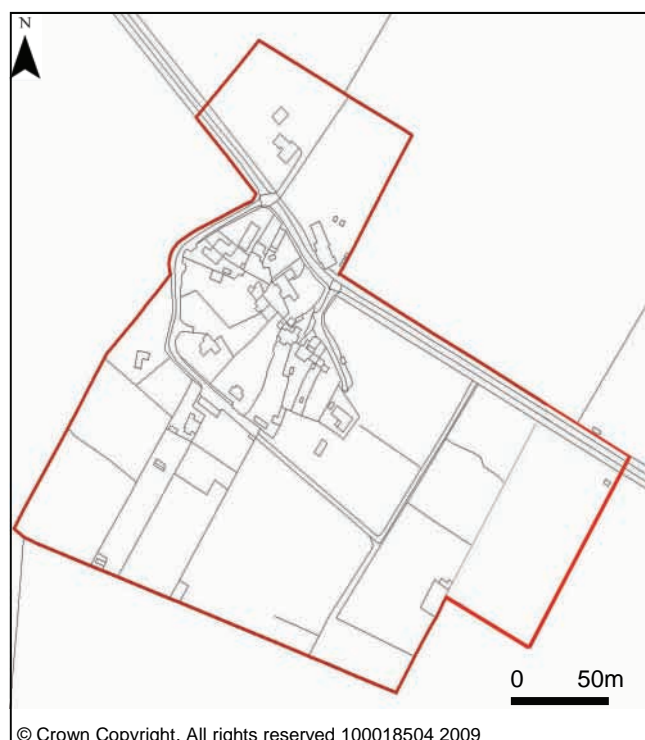
The boundary runs from the centre of the hamlet along the north eastern edge of the road towards the south east before crossing the road level with the end of the playing field and running along its length before rejoining the allotments. The southern boundary follows the allotment edges and runs along the rear plots turning north east and joining the western side of the unadopted lane before rejoining the road. The boundary then runs along the road towards the north west before following the old allotment outline, now the garden of Larkwell and rear garden of Southview, and rejoining the road to the south east.

Under the Inclosure Act of 1854 an area of two acres, immediately east of the allotments, was provided for recreation. The Inclosure of the common land had a serious impact on the lives and income of the residents of Juniper Hill and the recreation ground represented some small recompense. Known locally as 'The Playing Field' this area is still actively used by parishioners in particular for the annual fete on the first Sunday of July but also recently for a performance of Keith Dewhurst's 1970s adaptation of Flora Thompson's first book in May 2007. The playing field is also used by local football clubs. During the Second World War the playing field was cultivated as part of the war effort and then fell into disuse in the following years. It was not until the late 1960s /early 1970s that the playing field was restored back to community use. The playing field was not included in the 1980 Conservation Area but is felt to represent an important element of Juniper Hill's history and to be an area of historical and visual importance to the settlement. The Playing Field is now included within the revised Conservation Area boundary.

1980 boundary



Current boundary





# 8. Materials and Details





# 9. Historic Photographs



The path 'round the Rise' 1974



2008



Entrance to the hamlet 1974



2008



Lark Rise Cottage or 'The End House',  
Flora Thompson's home 1974



2008

Juniper Hill is unusual in the relative lack of change within the last 30 years. The photographs above show views within the hamlet from the 1970s and the same views today. There have been a number of extensions, Southview in particular has been significantly enlarged while buildings such as Lark Rise Cottage have had smaller additions. The road through the centre of Juniper Hill has been narrowed, bollards added and the K6 style phonebox lost but otherwise the change is limited. The higher hedges seen in the 2008 image of the Rise are possibly indicative of the greater desire for privacy of the property owners as interest in Flora Thompson brings visitors to Juniper Hill.

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# 10. Management Plan

## 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 Juniper Hill Conservation Area is the incremental urbanisation and extension of properties that could lead to the erosion of the hamlet's strong and unique character. Juniper Hill still retains a very strong connection with its agricultural context both visually and physically. Not only the allotments but the general level of community cultivation within the hamlet sets it apart from the surroundings. Since the hamlet lies within the Parish of Cottisford, which is a Category 3 village, there is very little likelihood of significant new residential development.

Another threat that is relevant in 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 and additions such as non-traditional porches.

Such alterations to unlisted residential properties are for the most part permitted development and therefore do not require planning permission. However unsympathetic permitted development can 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 sympathetic to the individual property, sympathetic to the streetscape and 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.



*The allotments looking north east*

## Generic Guidance

The Council Will:

- 1 Promote a policy of repair rather than replacement of traditional architectural details. Where repairs are not economically viable then the promotion of bespoke sympathetic replacement is encouraged. This is particularly the case for windows when sympathetic re-fenestration is important in preserving the appearance of the building in the design and materials.
- 2 Discourage the use of Upvc windows in historic properties . The use of Upvc in listed buildings will not be permitted and where unauthorised work is carried out enforcement action will be taken.
- 3 Actively promote the use of traditional building and roofing materials in new extensions and repair. The use of local limestone is encouraged.
- 4 Encourage owners of historic properties, not just those that are listed, to replace inappropriate modern with the appropriate traditional materials, for example wood or metal casements. Materials such as uPVC and concrete tiles look out of place in a Conservation Area and their use is discouraged.
- 5 Promote the distinctiveness of the local thatching tradition. Historically thatch was a ubiquitous roofing material across the district. This prevalence has been reduced to small pockets of buildings. Local style and traditions in thatch are to be promoted to enhance the importance of the few thatched properties that remain. There is only one thatched property remaining in Juniper Hill which is the listed Thatch End (formerly Japonica Cottage) this should be retained and maintained. When possible the buildings block-cut ridge should be returned to the traditional plain flush ridge which is more appropriate to the area.
- 6 Exercise a presumption against artificial cladding material, including render on the front elevations of buildings.
- 7 Encourage the sympathetic location of solar panels on inconspicuous roof slopes or on outbuildings.
- 8 Require the location of satellite dishes in inconspicuous sites to prevent harm to the historic character and visual appearance of the area.
- 9 Encourage the removal of excess or unused materials from the allotment edges. Although a certain amount of machinery and equipment is in keeping with the rural agricultural character of the hamlet it is important that this is kept to a minimum. A build up of excessive clutter is detrimental to the appearance of the conservation area.



*Vernacular thatched roofs have been largely replaced by slate and tile*



*Build up of materials at allotment edges*



- 10 Discourage disfiguring alterations such as unsympathetic extensions, altering the dimensions of window openings and the removal of chimneys.
- 11 Investigate whether appropriate planning permission or listed building consent has been obtained for an alteration. Unauthorised alterations, internal or external, to a listed building is a criminal offence and if necessary the council will enforce against this.
- 12 Promote traditional 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 (where mortar is left standing proud of the stonework) and similar is considered a totally inappropriate style of pointing for this district.
- 13 Promote the use of lime mortar in the construction and repointing of stone and brickwork. This traditional building material is strongly advocated and its use is beneficial to traditional buildings. This is in contrast to hard cementaceous mortars often used in modern construction, which can accelerate the weathering of the local limestone.
- 14 Promote the use of limewash in properties which are historically colourwashed. The removal of limewash can lead to accelerated erosion of the limestone rubble while effecting the visual character of the hamlet and where possible should be avoided.
- 15 Promote the use of sympathetic materials for garage doors. Vertical timber boarded side hung doors are preferable to metal or fibreglass versions which can have a negative impact on the rural setting.
- 16 Generally encourage the good maintenance of properties including boundary walls.
- 17 Support alterations to buildings where this would enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area.
- 18 Create a dialogue with service providers to encourage undergrounding of power cables to reduce the visual pollution caused by the overhead lines and their supporting poles within the hamlet.
- 19 Encourage the sympathetic location of both amenity and private security lighting to limit light 'pollution'. Excessive lighting within the hamlet can have an adverse effect on the very rural character of the area. The material and design of the fittings and their position on the building should be carefully considered.
- 20 Promote the repair or replacement of lost or inappropriate boundary treatments with traditional walling, fencing or hedging in a style or species appropriate to the location. There are two stretches of significant cast iron railings remaining on the main road through Juniper Hill which should be retained.
- 21 Promote the use of a suitable style of boundary for the position within the village, for example the use of simple post fencing for properties backing onto open ground and stone walls in the hamlet centre.
- 22 Promote the retention of historic footpaths within and around the conservation area and work with the Parish Meeting and Oxford County Council to prevent these being lost. The informality of these paths should be preserved and attempts to add hard surfaces or extensive signage should be resisted. The Parish Meeting has recently ensured the survival of the stile on the allotments which is mentioned in Flora Thompson's work. It is features such as this and the footpath between Juniper Hill and Cottisford which ensure that the setting of the hamlet remains evocative of its fascinating past.

## Management and protection of important green spaces

The Council will:

1. Promote positive management of vegetation. Trees and hedges make an important contribution to the character and appearance of a Conservation Area. Planting of exotic imports or inappropriate varieties, such as Leylandii, are to be strongly discouraged, as these trees grow fast and can alter or block important views as well being uncharacteristic of the area. The trees and hedges within and around Juniper Hill play a key role in the character of the Conservation Area, particularly on the Rise. Advance notice needs to be given to the Council of the intention to top, lop or fell trees over a certain girth within the conservation area, although this does not apply to fruit trees, dead or dangerous trees. This is intended to prevent the loss of trees which play a particularly important role in the character of the Conservation area (further details in page 27 or on application to the Council).
2. Promote the sympathetic management of open areas within the Conservation Area. In Juniper Hill the allotments are historically and visually important to the conservation area. Although less than 20 % are currently cultivated it is essential that this area of land remains open. The retention and careful management of the playing field is also important to the social history and current life of the hamlet.
3. Seek to preserve the rural character of verges by working with the Highway Authority to avoid the insertion of inappropriate kerbing which would have an urbanising effect whilst seeking solutions that prevent harm to verges by parked cars. The erosion of grass verges by visitors to Juniper Hill is sometimes a problem and where possible the effects should be mitigated by opening the playing field when visitor numbers are high.
4. Encourage the retention and good maintenance of garden walls and boundary hedges.
5. Resist development that would adversely affect the setting of the village. Further development within the hamlet or in the surrounding area is unlikely because of the Parish's status as Category 3 and because of the detrimental impact that development is likely to have on the rural setting of Juniper Hill.



*Trees add to the character of the area*



*The hedges on the southern boundary*



*Enclosed character of the rise*



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# 12. Appendix

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 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.

## 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.

**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.

## 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.

**H12** New housing in the rural areas of the district will be permitted within existing settlements in accordance with policies H13, H14 and H15. Schemes which meet a specific and identified local housing need will be permitted in accordance with policies H5 and H6.

**H19** Proposals for the conversion of a rural building, whose form, bulk and general design is in keeping with its surroundings to a dwelling in a location beyond the built-up limits of a settlement will be favourably considered provided:

- (i) the building can be converted without major rebuilding or extension and without inappropriate alteration to its form and character;

- (ii) the proposal would not cause significant harm to the character of the countryside or the immediate setting of the building;

- (iii) the proposal would not harm the special character and interest of a building of architectural or historic significance;

- (iv) the proposal meets the requirements of the other policies in the plan.

**H21** Within settlements the conversion of suitable buildings to dwellings will be favourably considered unless conversion to a residential use would be detrimental to the special character and interest of a building of architectural and historic significance. In all instances proposals will be subject to 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.

**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.

**C27** Development proposals in villages will be expected to respect their historic settlement pattern.

**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

**EN34** the council will seek to conserve and enhance the character and appearance of the landscape through the control of development. Proposals will not be permitted if they would:

- (i) cause undue visual intrusion into the open countryside;
- (ii) cause undue harm to important natural landscape features and topography;
- (iii) be inconsistent with local character;
- (iv) harm the setting of settlements, buildings, structures or other landmark features;
- (v) harm the historic value of the landscape.

**EN35** The Council will seek to retain woodlands, trees, hedges, ponds, walls and any other features which are important to the character or appearance of the local landscape as a result of their ecological, historic or amenity value. Proposals which would result in the loss of such features will not be permitted unless their loss can be justified by appropriate mitigation and/or compensatory measures to the satisfaction of the council.

**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.

**EN43** proposals that would result in the total or substantial demolition of a listed building, or any significant part of it, will not be permitted in the absence of clear and convincing evidence that the market testing set out in PPG15 paragraphs 3.16 to 3.19 has been thoroughly followed with no success.

**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.

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

**EN48** Development that would damage the character, appearance, setting or features of designed historic landscapes (parks and gardens) and battlefields will be refused.

**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.

Cherwell District Council designated Juniper Hill a Conservation Area in 1980 in recognition of the hamlet's special architectural and historic interest, which should be preserved and enhanced. The area was designated under Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

The effects of designation are explained briefly below.

1. Cherwell District Council, as the local planning authority, will exercise a particular care to ensure that change, when it occurs, will preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area.
2. All planning applications for development which would affect the character or appearance of the area must be advertised in the local press and site notices must be posted so that the maximum opportunity for comment is given to the public before a decision is reached.
3. Cherwell District Council, as the local planning authority, will require planning applications in the Conservation Area to be accompanied by sufficient detail to enable the impact of the proposed development on the character or appearance of the Conservation Area to be assessed. This may include details of scale, massing, design and materials of buildings and their relationship to existing buildings.
4. It is an offence to cut down, top, lop, uproot or wilfully damage or destroy any tree (not already the subject of a tree preservation order) in the conservation area without giving six weeks' notice to the District Council. This provision does not relate to trees covered by a felling licence, to dead trees, to trees which do not exceed 75mm (3 inches approx.) in diameter, or to certain other trees, details of which can be obtained from the Council.
5. Conservation Area consent is required from the local planning authority for the demolition or substantial demolition of buildings in excess of 115 cubic meters and enclosures over a certain height within the Conservation Area. Exceptions to this rule are those laid down in section 75 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Exceptions mainly relate to small buildings within the curtilage of a dwelling; gates, walls, fences and other enclosures below the specified height; temporary buildings; certain agricultural and industrial buildings; and buildings required to be demolished under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, The Housing Act 1985 or the Pastoral Measure 1983. Roof extensions, including all dormer windows, and external cladding require Conservation Area consent.
6. Procedures pertaining to listed buildings remain essentially unaltered as listed building consent takes precedence over Conservation Area consent. Therefore all works of alteration, demolition or extension to a listed building require listed building consent.
7. Scheduled ancient monuments are exempt from Conservation Area control and scheduled monument consent for proposed works must be sought from the Department of Culture, Media and Sport.



## Acknowledgments

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